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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER, 1934

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Women's Indian Association

OBJECTS

1. To present to Women their responsibilities as daughters of India.

2. To secure for every girl and boy the right of Education through schemes of Compulsory Primary Education, including the teaching of religion.

3. To secure the abolition of child-marriage and other social evils.

4. To secure for Women the vote for Municipal and Legislative Councils on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men.

5. To secure adequate representation of Women on Municipalities, Taluk and Local Boards, Legislative Councils and Assemblies.

6. To secure for Women the right to vote and to be elected for the Council of State.

7. To establish equality of rights and opportunities between Men and Women.

8. To help Women to realise that the future of India lies largely in their hands: for as wives and mothers they have the task of training, guiding and forming the character of the future rulers of India.

9. To band Women into groups for the purpose of self-development and education, and for the definite service of others.

Women who agree and will co-operate with the Objects and Organization of the Association may become members. Groups of Women having the same aims can be affiliated to the Women's Indian Association.

Local Branches are self-governing and make their own arrangements.

ORGANIZATION

The Association, which has a central organization at the W. I. A. Headquarters, Pantheon Gardens, Egmore, Madras, was started on May 8, 1917, and has grown and increased steadily ever since. It now has 72 Branches, 24 Centres and over 4,000 members.

Branches are formed in every place where possible, with a local Secretary to arrange the work to suit local conditions and report to Headquarters.

The political policy of the Association is to work for Reforms through the Legislative Councils.

The aims, ideals and work of the Association are on a religious but non-sectarian basis.

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Stri-Dharma

Vol. XVII. OCTOBER, 1934 No. 12.

WOMEN—COME TO THE RESCUE OF HUMANITY!

An interview with the illustrious Russian artist-philosopher, the academician Nicholas Roerich about the Women of Nippon and the problems of women in general.

Nicholas Roerich has graciously consented to tell us about the movements of the women social workers of Nippon and has shared his views upon the problems of the duties of women of the entire world.

On the 22nd of May, at the home of Countess Uesuni at Tokyo, Nicholas Roerich addressed a group of representatives of women's organizations of Nippon. Nicholas Roerich pointed out that the present epoch is everywhere considered as the epoch of the Mother of the World. This epoch makes prominent a special activity of women and brings them forth to the front ranks as the bearers of culture.

At the same time this honorary mission imposes upon women a particular responsibility, as the guardians not only of the family, nation and state, but also as the guardians of world peace. Only in the hands of women the peace, to which all humanity strives, will be realized as a creative and virile future, in which will appear a true co-operation. Learn how to create heroes!—says Nicholas Roerich. He also quoted a passage from his address to the Women's Unity of Roerich Museum, which begins as follows:

"When there are difficulties in the home we turn to the woman. When accounts and calculations are no longer of aid; when enmity and mutual destruction reach their limits, we turn to the woman. When evil forces overcome one, then woman is invoked. When the statistical mind becomes helpless then one remembers the woman. Verily, when wrath pauperizes the judgment of the mind, only the heart finds saving solutions. And where is the heart which can replace the woman's? And where is the courage of a heart-fire, which can be compared with the courage of woman at the brink of the insoluble? What hand can replace the calming touch of conviction of a woman's heart? And what eye, having endured the pain of suffering will respond as self-sacrificingly in the name of Bliss?"

Nicholas Roerich concluded his talk with the representatives of women's movements in Nippon with a call to an international union of women, pointing out how many benevolent beginnings have already been made in this direction and how easily they were accomplished. Even with little patience one may weave the sacred universal veil of the Mother of the World.

The audience was deeply touched by this hearty call and the renowned social worker, the Head of the Trans-Oceanic Association of Women of Nippon, Mrs. Mashi Matsudaira answered Professor Roerich in the following terms:

"I have listened to your statement, Dr. Roerich, with the greatest emotion and I am fully in accord with your opinion about the woman's position from the point of view of universal significance, and if we shall look forward, we see that the condition of woman deserves still more attention. Speaking of the furtherance of the development of culture by women, we ever remember that it always is prompted by purely motherly feelings, which helps to perfect the education of our children, lovingly eliminating all difficulties and obstacles. In questions of the uplifting of the level of culture and a wide-spreading of education, our group is always working in co-operation with local educational institutions and other women's unions. We hope to direct all our endeavours in close co-operation with all women's organizations throughout the world, in order jointly and to our best ability to apply all our efforts towards the establishment of eternal peace and rapprochement of all nations. In general, everybody strives with all their hearts to the realization of peace, but a true peace will be found in that world, where the moral foundations will be firmly observed. If in one country the morals will be high, but its neighbouring country will remain immoral, then such a situation cannot be considered as one of true peace."

"Every country has its different political and international organizations, whose aim it is to make their country flourish and to support the preservation of their nation, as well as the establishment between nations of friendship and rapprochement. But as all these organizations were founded by men, it seems to me that the watching over these organizations of men, in the sense of whether they act morally or not, must belong to women. At the present time among the nations there could be established a mutual understanding, but often this path is as yet not open to women, for the reason that they cannot be properly informed about the real state of affairs and hence cannot introduce into life the above cited problems".

"In view of this we desire greatly to open a new way together with foreign women of the same high aspirations, beyond the boundaries of nationality and to begin the first step with a motherly love, which we manifest unceasingly towards children regardless of

whether our own or not, carrying in one's heart the high understanding of a firm realization in life of our ideas, not being hampered by any obstacles. I ask Professor Roerich not to refuse us his help. All these women's duties will be fulfilled with a deep religious faith and motherly love !".

This request of Mrs. Mashi Matsudaira, Professor Roerich sends to all other countries and he feels sure that the women's heart will not only rejoice at this beautiful call of the women of Nippon, but will blend in a united effort and labour towards the Common Good. Truly, the dates approach, when one must manifest all one's spiritual forces and possibilities.

My dear readers ponder over the words of this great man, who says that the women, girdled with the power of love, which is the divine force, as a host of Light, must gather against the darkness and evil and come to the rescue of humanity, which is at present in unprecendented peril.

Let us remember that Joan of Arc has once saved her country. United as one, let us save our earth !

Let us save the earth and let us transfigure the world !

NATALIE REZNIKOV.

THE MEANING OF PAIN.

Do not cheat thy Heart and tell her,
"Grief will pass away;
Hope for fairer times in future
And forget to-day."—
Tell her, if you will, that sorrow
Need not come in vain;
Tell her that the lesson taught her
Far outweighs the pain.

Cheat her not with the old comfort,
"Soon she will forget,"—
Bitter truth, alas,—but matter
Rather for regret;
Bid her not "Seek other pleasures,
Turn to other things:"—
Rather nurse the caged sorrow
Till the captive sings.

Rather bid her go forth bravely,
And the stranger greet;
Not as foe, with spear and buckler,
But as dear friends meet;
Bind her with a strong clasp, hold her
By her dusky wings—
Listening for the murmured blessing
Sorrow always brings.

Adelaide Anne Proctor.

LECTURE AT EDINBURGH BY BEGUM SULTAN AMIRUDDIN

Begum Sultan Amiruddin, wife of Mr. Mir Amiruddin, District and Sessions Judge, Madras Presidency, who is making a study of the social work that is being done in the West, and who has been taken round by Lady Cynthia Colville, Lord Goschen and others to a number of social welfare centres, hospitals, maternity clinics, and educational institutions in England was invited by the All Peoples' Association, Edinburgh on the 11th August to deliver a lecture on "India's Womanhood". Prior to this, Begum Amiruddin has spoken at different meetings and different places in England enlightening the people of this country about India and Indian women. Miss Wrench, the President of the Association gave a delightful At Home to the Begum and when welcoming Mr and Mrs. Amiruddin introduced the latter as one of the pioneers of Muslim Women's education in India, and narrated how despite the fact that she had given up purdah only a few months ago, she had all along been doing very useful work for the uplift of India's Womanhood. She said it was a great pleasure to have an Indian. lady of such distinction and attainments in their midst.

Begum Amiruddin in her speech at the outset dwelt on the position of Hindu women during the Vedic Age. She pointed out that India was the seat of early civilization and culture, and women during these early days had full proprietary rights and there was no restriction hampering their freedom of movement. Even Manu, who by some reformers is deemed to have been an enemy of womankind is said to have proclaimed, "Where women are honoured there the Gods are honoured, and where they are not honoured all rites are fruitless."

With regard to Muslim women she pointed out the reforms effected by Islam in their position. Prior to the advent of Islam, women were looked upon as the most degenerate section of society, and they not only had no right to inheritance, but they themselves were subject to inheritance, and after a man's death, passed on to his heirs like other goods and chattels to be disposed of by them at their will. But with the advent of Islam, immediate transformation was effected. The Prophet Mahomed, who was the greatest champion of women's rights, granted to woman the right of inheritance, made her a free agent in matters of marriage and declared her to be an enitity in herself capable of acting independently on her own account on the attainment of majority. Hence, even after marriage, a Mohomedan woman has had ever since the past 1300 years the right of disposing of and alienating her property herself and of entering into contracts and agreements—rights which

were witheld from the English women until the passing of the Married Women's Property Acts during the latter half of the nineteenth century. A Muslim woman, when she marries, does not lose her individuality, and her existence does not merge into that of the husband. She retains her own personality, her own property and her own name, the custom of adopting the husband's name on marriage being still alien to Indians, both Hindu and Mahomedan.

The speaker then traced the history of the purdah system and pointed out how owing to uncertainty of conditions in India and owing to the development of a sense of chivalry in the East in a different direction from that in the West, women began to assume the veil and gradually seclusion became a mark of respect and nobility. She also demonstrated that the life of women in purdah is not as unbearable and a life of enslavement as was imagined by foreign visitors who were apt to describe purdahnishin women as degraded human beings. The Begum said that she had been in purdah all her life, and that she and her three sisters had taken their degrees in purdah, and that among purdahnishin women one could find authors, poetesses, social workers, inspectresses of schools etc. Nevertheless, she stated that this custom served as a drag to many a useful work that women could do and was a great hardship to the poorer classes. It was therefore, a happy sign to note that the stringency of this custom was being relaxed to a great extent in the country.

She next dwelt on the social evil of child marriage, and the steps that are being taken to eradicate this custom. She pointed out that the root-cause of all the social evils prevalent in the country was the lack of education among the masses. When illiteracy would be conquered, most of the ills from which the body politic was suffering would disappear by themselves.

Begum Amiruddin then gave an account of the advance made and the work done by the women of India and demonstrated how everywhere the old order was changing yielding place to the new. It was a common sight to-day in India to see women taking to professions—medical, educational, legal etc., serving on Municipal and Local bodies and acting as Honorary Magistrates. She also pointed out that Madras was the first City that appointed a woman as Deputy President of its Legislative Council. During the past years, a number of Colleges for Women had sprung up throughout the country, and at the various Indian Universities, she said there was absolutely no distinction between men and women. She regretted the ban that is still placed on women at the University of Cambridge, which she had recently visited, and expressed the hope that in this advanced age such restrictions would soon be removed. She stated that the Madras University had to-day women in all its bodies including the Syndicate.

Modern India as a whole, and the Government of the country, Begum Amiruddin went on to say were generous to women and took into consideration their claims in all schemes for the country's advancement. But, she observed, while women were being accorded whole-hearted support and encouragement, the general opinion seemed to be that the modern woman should exercise her discretion as to what to adopt of the novel ideas of to-day and what to reject. She stressed the fact that Indian women in their advance wished to preserve in themselves a spirit of enquiry along with a spirit of criticism, so that the quintessence of ancient and modern, occidental and oriental wisdom might be discovered and developed in accordance with the needs of the times and of their country. Indian women while keen in participating in the civil and public life of their country had never favoured the disruption of home life, as family life has always remained a very strong feature of India. The women of India, she stated had made a niche for themselves in the history of their country in the past and if they proceeded with due caution, eschewing excesses, their present advance inspired great hopes for the future.

In conclusion Bugum Amiruddin said that during her stay in England she had the pleasure of coming in contact with several great minds and was particularly impressed with the social work that the women of this country were doing and with the desire of British women to help the women of India in every way possible. She promised to convey to the women of India the former's message of friendship and good-will.

FOR A LITTLE BROWN DOG.

For a little Brown Dog, who "sees" me down
The hill to the car when I go to town,
And carries my bag with an air of pride
As he trots sedately by my side,
And waits to see that I'm on all right,
And watches the car till it's out of sight.
I thank Thee!
For the way that he tears down the hill to meet
That car at night on his mad little feet—
The car that will bring me, he knows from town—
And the joyous greeting, as I step down,
A greeting that passengers hear and see,
Every one of them envying me.
I thank Thee!
For the great true heart that is in his eyes,
Tender and patient, and brave and wise,
That makes him know when I'm sick or sad,
And, knowing, love me the more—dear lad!
With a love unquestioning, high and fine
For all of that Little Brown Dog of Mine.
I thank Thee!

MINNIE LEONA UPTON.

THE JUNIOR MAHARANI OF TRAVANCORE

(BY A CORRESPONDENT)

If any person, excepting His Highness the Maharaja, counts more than another to-day in Travancore it is Her Highness Maharani Sethu Parvathi Bai, the Maharaja's mother. In no small measure is Her Highness the spring of the progressive thought that informs life and politics to-day in the State.

Outside Travancore Her Highness has been frequently acclaimed as an example in many respects for the womenfolk of India. She combines qualities rarely found together, such, as energy and culture, vitality and delicacy, venturing idealism and every-day commonsense. Her Highness ranges freely and widely in conversation, pleasing and instructing, and often revealing an understanding of life's needs and problems, which many a great man trying to straighten out the difficulties of the world might admire. The rare insight, the arresting reflection, is always clothed in handsome phrases. Her Highness has a naturally graceful posture and her shining eyes and dark glossy hair lend appropriate physical graces to a somewhat original and certainly abundant mind. Her Highness lives a strenuous life, alike as a mother and a woman and to look at her is to feel that the secret of being young lies in how we cherish youth's loftiest impulses of idealism and effort, whether we are young or old in the reckoning of years.

These qualities even in life's ordinary stations are likely to raise one above one's equals and it is only natural that they should have gained some amount of additional emphasis in one belonging to such a pristine and shining royal family as that of Travancore.

Her Highness's first oversea trip, which took place two years ago, was hailed throughout Travancore as a turning point in the history of this ruling house, for no member of it had ever crossed the sea before. It might seem curious that the rulers of a half-maritime state should have had such an aversion to travel on the waters, but the Travancore royal family has always looked upon itself as a bulwark of Hindu thought and tradition, which, for reasons hardly any longer observed or operative, tabooed travels over the oceans. It must, however, be noticed that a striking traditionary merit of the Hinduism-loving rulers of Travancore has been that they never for once allowed their personal religious convictions to interfere with the principles of enlightened administration. The late Maharaja Sri Mulam Thirunal (1885-1924) under whom the State attained remarkable progress in several directions lived a life of severe Hindu orthodoxy throughout his long reign. The Senior Maharani, Her Highness Sethu Lakshmi Bai, the Regent of the

State during the minority of the present Maharaja from 1924 to 1931, is almost equally well known for her piety and simplicity of character, which, however, did not prevent her liberal-mindedly cherishing the general good of the land during her time of power. There is undoubtedly much to praise in lives of self-renunciation and solicitude for others. It is the old ideal, but the thought of to-day is fast swerving to the view that it is good to have abundance for oneself as to let others have it and that freedom and beauty and joy are in no way inimical to higher life. Conformably to this view, the outlook generally accepted for women is no longer what it used to be. While Pericles exhorted the women of Athens to "Aspire only to the virtues that are peculiar to your sex . . . . . and think it your greatest commendation not to be talked of among men either for good or evil," the greatest men of to-day, not excepting Mahatma Gandhi himself, are like to tell them "Aspire to every virtue since all virtues are attainable by you as well as by us and think it your greatest commendation to be talked of among men for good and truth no less than for beauty."

The Newer Ideal

It is more or less this newer ideal that might be applied to Maharani Sethu Parvathi Bai, for the mould in which she is cast is one of noble visions and high yearnings, and consequently also of a certain sincere impatience with the defects of things such as they are. This is the reason why Her Highness can justly claim a place in the very forefront of progressive movements. Belonging to the royal family of Travancore, a position no less noteworthy for its restrictions than for its privileges, Her Highness could never perhaps attain to the full height of her rich and bounding gifts, but she would doubtless have limitations too few rather than too many, in which lies a great, necessary and desirable appeal to the growing generation of women in India, for the time worn concepts of womanhood in this country have erred, if on the right side, rather more than was good for its daughters. To Her Highness to quote her own words, "repose is decay, and the common and unlovely spell the death of culture."

Oversea Travels

Her Highness is a pure, free and fascinating spirit, ever seeking, to quote her again, 'new rhythms and graces' and 'perfections in small things as in great.' Aided by a liberal education, she saw the world in her early life in something of its infinite variety and beauty, desiring to come in contact with it, as opportunities offered, for the enrichment of her own spirit and personality. She usefully preceded her European travels by constant and prolonged travels throughout India, seeing and learning for herself, seeking the broader outlook and the rounded graces in the

contact of mind with mind, presiding at women's conferences and giving informed lead to their cause, and gathering ideas, examples and ideals for her own land. Her first European travel was quickly repeated in the company of His Highness the Maharaja, for whose all-sided education and preparation for his high destiny she has single mindedly and as results have now unmistakably begun to show, fruitfully laboured for years and for whose success in the government of his advanced and exceedingly intelligent subjects she should, no doubt, be continuing still to labour lovingly. It is hardly conceivable that the Maharaja would have gone on the European tour unless the Maharani had been convinced from her own experience of the certain benefits to be obtained from it. Be it as it may, but it is a known fact that feeling and judgement in all sections of the State's people enthusiastically acclaimed these over-sea wanderings of their royal family apparently in breach of an ancient and therefore hallowed custom. Even the Nambudiris, than whom there is no class of Brahmins in India more reputed for conservatism and orthodox living were of the opinion that "when the social conditions of ancient times that prohibited sea-voyages and foreign travels are compared with the present-day popular views on education, reformation and advancement, it is those who have not acquired worldly experience from travel who ought undoubtedly to be declared out-caste!"

Her Highness saw how in the west people lived full lives 'compact of many-sided activities,' how they successfully combined political and commercial pursuits with a devotion to manifold forms of art and what excellent models of organisation and discipline they had developed for less advanced peoples to look at and copy. Her Highness was vastly impressed by the way women in the West were everywhere feeling their growing influence in everyday activities and public affairs and winning more and more key-positions in life's concerns and entering hitherto untried spheres of occupation.

At the same time and, perhaps, what is more significant, Her Highness has an oppressive sense of the prevailing atmosphere in India, "an atmosphere that has grown stale and stifling, an atmosphere surcharged with the nuisance of social claims, communal antagonisms and self-centred pre-occupations." And she yearns, perhaps more than for anything else, for 'fresh air.'

Her Highness is always fresh and youthful, aspiring and abundant, appreciative of the good and useful and ardent, almost as an aritist, for the beautiful. She affords a fine example both as a mother and a woman and her talents and sensibilities are such that were she not a princess she would easily have been an awakener and leader of her sex. Her Highness puts the lovely thought in one's mind that 'Life has no greater ornament than cultured womanhood.'

Travancore is changing to-day rapidly and greatly. Electric energy is coming to facilitate its industrial advance. Its education is turning a new leaf. Its administration enjoys the guidance of two great and seasoned statesmen of South India. The Maharaja has already endowned his people with a new liberal constitution well adapted to grow with the growing times. In fact, a new era has been set afoot in the State since the assumption of ruling powers by the Maharaja two and a half years ago. It is a great blessing to His Highness that he has an illustrious mother to turn to for advice and guidance.

OPINION OF RAO BAHADUR K. V. SESHA AIYANGAR, M.A., B.L., HONORARY SECRETARY, MADRAS VIGILANCE ASSOCIATION

(THE GIRL'S PROTECTION BILL)

From the statement of objects and reasons and the Legislative Assembly debates it appears that the Bill is mainly directed against the virtual sale of girls under the guise of marriage to persons between whom and the girl there is abnormal desparity in age. As this is a social evil which is widely prevalent the propriety of legislation may be held to be established. But there are a number of difficulties. Firstly it will be difficult to designate a marriage as a sale merely because there is a bride price given and received. A marriage confers definite and sometimes valuable rights upon the girl *viz.* of succession, maintenance, etc. Though these advantages do not reduce substantially the gravity of the evil, they make it difficult to designate the transaction as one of sale pure and simple. Nor can such a marriage be likened to a sale of a girl into slavery which is prohibited by Section 370 I. P. C. It is not a sale for purposes of prostitution which is penalised by Section 372 I. P. C.

If Legislative remedy is to be sought for against the evil it will be better to enact a straight and simple provision either invalidating the marriage of girls below a certain age to persons between whom and the girls there is a disparity of 40 years and above or penalising such marriages in terms similar to those employed in Sections 370 and 372 I. P. C.

This will involve a radical re-drafting of the bill Section (1) may stand as it is. Section 2 (*a*) may be deleted altogether. There is no need to give an artificially extended definition of parents. Nor is the definition of 'parent' a happy one.

Section 2 (*b*) may also be deleted. The language of Section 370 with suitable modifications as to age limit may be adopted. Dealing with the question of age limit I would suggest the raising of the age to 16 years as is done under Section 370 I. P. C. The introduction of a new age of majority is open to objection in view of The Majority Act IX of 1875.

Section 3 :—The penalty is too low for the offence which is a grave one. If the Act is not to be evaded as is sometimes the case with the Child Marriage Restraint Act the penalty has to be considerably enhanced. A maximum of three years R. I. and Rupees One Thousand fine may be provided.

Section 4 is not happily drafted.—If the present penalty is retained the power of the Police as regards arrest may be conferred in terms of the language of Section 57 Crl. P.C.

In the Legislative Assembly debates it has been suggested that this bill is superfluous in view of the Child Marriage Restraint Act. In its present form the objection has considerable force. It is not to be expected that public opinion is more alert on this question than it is in cases of Child marriage. With the present penalties the opportunities for evading the proposed Act are as wide and tempting as in the case of the Child Marriage Restraint Act. If therefore the age limit is not increased the Bill is superfluous unless the penalty is enhanced. With an increase in the age limit it may serve a useful purpose provided sufficient propaganda is done to educate the public.

DR. (MRS.) S. MUTHULAKSHMI REDDI

On the 27th January 1927 the Madras Legislative Council presented a strange picture—the picture of a solemn assemblage of Statesmen, Princes, and Scholars presided over by the shy, small figure of a spectacled lady sinking deep into the soft-cushioned seat of the Speaker's chair. It was unheard of in the world and unprecedented in history. Women M.P.'s, Women ministers, women governors and women warriors the world has seen but not a woman president of a deliberative assembly. History was therefore made when the Madras Legislature made Dr. Muthulakshmi its Deputy President. The conferment of this unique honour on her constituted a Kohinoor on the dazzling diadem of Indian womanhood. Not a drum was heard, nor a gun was fired and the exclusive fortress of masculine monopoly silently glided into the hands of our sisters, The flag of peaceful feminism was unfurled and one more magnificent triumph was added to the women! Unlike England where "a monstrous regiment" of militant women had to wrest their rights from the unwilling grip of men, men in the Province of Madras magnanimously yielded when women demanded their birthright.

Madras had for long been contemptuously dubbed as 'benighted' by the rest of India. But, of late, Madras has been emerging out of the gloom into the floodlights of civilization. It has been producing such men and women, and performing such acts as have

kindled the feelings of envy and emulation in the whole of India. Not the least important among such acts is her intelligent initiative in the matter of giving the womanhood its due. Before any other province thought of such a question, Madras alone moved in the matter and by exercising the power vested in its Legislature conferred on women the jus suffragi—the right of voting. It was naturally followed by the conferment of the right of election and nomination to the Local legislature. The only woman who contested an election—Mrs. Kamaladevi—having been defeated at the polls, Dr. Muthulakshmi, who was elected by the Women's Indian Association was recommended to Government and was duly nominated to the Council—Quite in keeping with the high sense of political chivalry that had actuated it so far, the Madras Legislature further elected her as its Deputy President.

Invited thus by the entire House to guide its deliberations, Dr. Muthulakshmi nervously took the chair and not without misgivings. The imposing composition of the House, the enormous responsibility placed on her, and the consciousness that the whole assembly was rivetting its gaze on her—the only woman there—all this flashed through her mind and petrified her for a moment. But soon she came to herself and listened gravely and attentively to the speeches of the Hon. Members. Sensitive to the last degree, she felt within herself that the worth and reputation of her sex wholly depended on how best she was going to acquint herself that day. Soon her powers of judgment were put to the test. The discussion was on the Kumararaja of Venkatagiri's amendment to the Madras Famine Code. She was required to give her ruling which she did. To her great pride and gratification it was a correct one. She felt with a sigh of relief that she had kept up and enhanced the reputation of her sex whose representative she was.

"It was a good thing" said Lady Astor "that the first woman to get into Parliament was an ordinary woman, because it made it easier for other ordinary women to succeed her." The first woman to become a member of an Indian Legislature, Dr. Muthulakshmi too can say the same thing of herself, perhaps with greater truth. For, Lady Astor is an "ordinary woman" of a strange type—a torrential personality, who if she were the rule instead of the exception, "life on this planet would be too thrilling an affair to contemplate with composure." She is so full of the "engaging audacities," impulsive gaieties and formidable bravado that she is ordinary only in an extraordinary sense. But Dr. Muthulakshmi is none of these. If Lady Astor's "view halloo," assures the House of sport and sensation, the dignified bearing of the Doctor diffuses respect everywhere. Mrs. Reddi would not for example, have exclaimed to Sir Patro "Oh, you old villain, I will get you next time" and would not have held

him by the coat tails when the latter opposed her Devadasi Bill, as Lady Astor had done in the case of Sir Frederick Banbury. Nor is the Doctor capable of terrorising her mischievous interrupter into silence as Lady Astor did a villainous interrupter of hers. When the member for Dumfermline said that she should confine herself to milk and babies and leave the Navy alone, Lady Astor retorted that if he would drink more milk and less *lemonade* he would be more polite to the only woman in the House. Any retaliation of such a vehement nature and ungenerous implication is impossible to conceive from Mrs. Reddi. She was speaking in the Council on the necessity of reservation of seats for women on the ground that they are not economically independent and can ill-afford to spend on election campaigns. Mr. S. Satyamurthi interrupted her saying "Women have jewels" And how did she reply him? She simply said "Sir, the Hon. Member for the University says that women are adorned with jewels. Yes, that is so because men adorn them with jewels, give them silk sarees and they may even give them motor cars to go to beach; but independence is quite a different matter." Not a crushing retort, to be sure but just becoming a modest woman of Mrs. Reddi's type.

"Who is the greatest and wisest woman in England?" Dr. Fort Newton asked of Jane Adams of America. "Maude Royden" she replied "for she wants women to be recognised as human beings and not as a sex." If this should be the criterion, Dr. Muthulakshmi cannot be the wisest and greatest woman of India. For, the ex-Deputy President of Madras insists on the recognition of women as a sex. That men's and women's interests are identical she does not hesitate to concede. And yet she maintains that "we want women to represent women's point of view and hence reservation of seats for women is necessary." As a Government spokesman once exclaimed "She is very zealous of ladies' rights." While a Doctor Besant roared in the genderless tones of general humanity, and a Sarojini lisps in sensuous numbers like a sweet-throated swan, Mrs. Reddi speaks in the afflicted accents of injured womanhood. Dr. Besant transcended the barriers of sex and nationality and tightened the bond that knit humanity together. Sarojini Devi jumps into the vortex of national politics and jeopardises her musical lyre for the cherished freedom of her country. But Dr. Muthulakshmi ceaselessly labours to save her fallen sex and regain for her sisters their Paradise Lost. This test apart, for intellectual agility and powers of pen and eloquence one must look elsewhere than to Mrs Reddi, her brilliant academic career and her bright medals, notwithstanding. A Besant or a Sarojini would better deserve the crown for that. Nevertheless, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi holds the most individual position among the public women of the time. She has evolved a technique of legislative liberation that will always stand to her political credit. In the breaking of man-made laws

and in the making of beneficial ones no woman of the modern times has beaten her record. Place in the Legislature was never better filled and position therein was never more utilised than by Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi. If intellectualism were not much exhibited, energy and sincerity were surely much in evidence. Like Miss Royden of England she "represents as effectually as any one the conscience and the moral sense of the community."

She devotes herself to social and educational work rather than purely political or religious work. Her activities touch mainly secular affairs and moral issues. Yet politics are no forbidden ground to her. She has enough of politics to heal the wrongs of her sex rather than hate her fellowmen, Dr. Muthulakshmi recognises no party and belongs to none. She is neither a Justice, nor a Swarajist, nor even an independent nationalist. She has never indentified herself with any party within the Council or without it. She is the friend and favourite of all the parties and the foe of none. Throughout her Council life, she was receiving the help of one party or other or of all the parties together. The Justice Party contributed its own quota to make her efforts a success. The Independent Party under Dr. P. Subbaroyan did all it could to implement her reform schemes. Above all she had the most valuable assistance from the Swarajist section of the House. She says "While all the peoples partie's in the Council favoured every scheme for the amelioration of women's conditions, I found that the notionalists and the Congress men, with one or two individual exceptions have been my staunch and enthusiastic supporters, especially the Andhras in khadar dress and gandhi caps."

During her year's stay in England, during the World Conference of women in Paris and in the course of her tour through America, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi has met many persons and seen many things—all that is best in the West. She has nothing but admiration for the women workers of the West. She appreciates the West at its real worth and does not hesitate to imbibe whatever is sound in its culture and civilization. In the course of a Budget debate a certain member desired that the Government should encourage the indigenous medicine of ayurvedic and unani systems in preference to the allopathic ones. But the then Deputy President opposed his suggestion and said that our systems are yet 'empirical and stand-still' and are not so fully developed as to be able to replace the allopathic system. "We ought to appreciate" she said "the good in any system and feel grateful to those men who have discovered such rare remedies as vaccination for small-pox, cures far malaria etc." That is not all. She admires the average Englishman for his high level of culture, politeness, independent and manly bearing and for his disciplined and orderly conduct and she regrets keenly that an average Indian does not possess those

qualities as a rule. Neither is she without a sense of appreciation of the British Government in India. "Let me impress upon the government" she exclaimed once "that we want their help and guidance for some time more." For she feared that without the help of the Britisher, the problems of untouchability and sex inequality could not be effectively solved. Perhaps, she has since changed her views. She has made some strides towards political 'extremism', of late.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi is essentially a patriot but she is not a fanatic. Never blind to the good in alien cultures she nevertheless yearns for the best in her own culture. Despite some of its advantages, she has never liked the moden system of education. Religion and morals never find a place in its curriculum, which has resulted in the predominence of materialism in a land famed for its spiritualism. She deplores this state of affairs most deeply. She would fain formulate a system in which our religion, our past culture and tradition should have a large share and at the same time be suitable to modern conditions of life." "I myself do not know what my own religion is" she painfully cries elsewhere, as though she would throw the blame for it on the present system of education. She would rather have the children taught the ennobling and indigenous tales of Nala and Damayanthi, Savitri and Satyawan than the foreign tales of Romeo and Juliet, and Othello and Desdemona. She is such a lover of her mother tongue that she would insist on education being imparted to our children only through the medium of the vernacular. Thus she is neither an unreasoning fanatic averse to all that is alien nor an indiscriminating slave aping all that is western. She is the living embodiment of all that is best both in the East and in the West. There is an admirable equipoise in her activities and bearing. A Brahmo that she is, her piety is charged with a modern spirit and a freedom from cant. Intellect and feeling are in harmonius blending. She has the respectability, love and self-sacrifice of the Indian mother and the intellectualism, energy and catholicity of the Western woman, all in one. Mrs. Reddi is not of the aggressively emancipated type. Man, according to her is not the natural foe of woman but her friend and well-wisher whose co-operation is essential for the welfare of the latter. And she loses no opportunity of expressing her thankfulness to men. "There is no sex rivalry and no sex antagonism" she says. She knows and is thankful for the fact that but for men and their noble efforts she could not have entered the Council, much less passed many measures of useful reform.

It is impossible to find a more vigilant and more sincere guardian-angel then Mrs. Reddi to protect and promote the interests of women in India. Redressing the grievances of her sex alone is her religion. Promoting the weal of her sisters is a passion with

her. She thinks about them, dreams about them, writes about them and speaks about them, with ceaseless concern and interest. Hardly does she do or talk of anything that has no bearing on the problem of womanhood. Every measure is good or bad according as it helps or hinders the advancement of her sex. Within a short span of three years and a half, she has achieved many things and passed more momentous measures than many legislators could have done during their life-time. For the establishment of a children's hospital, for the introduction of compulsory medical inspection for boys and girls, for the exemption of poor girls from the payment of fees etc. She was ceaselessly agitating and became successful. She spoke and wrote strongly in favour of providing the Women's Institutions in Madras with liberal grants; and her efforts were crowned with success. Her resolutions on the prevention of child marriage and the prevention of dedication of girls to Hindu temples are equally important. She moved resolutions and put interpellations and succeeded in having seats reserved for women in local bodies, above all comes her Act for the suppression of brothels for which though it was not directly moved her, she can claim the fullest credit. That alone will stand forth and eloquently proclaim her deep concern and interest for the much-neglected members of her sex. She considered it one of her pet schemes and piloted it through the legislature with perseverance and zeal. The passing of the Devadasi Bill in 1929 is another and by far the best achievement of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi as a legislator. Opposition to that measure automatically came from the vested interests. Indignant protests emerged from enlightened quarters too But the author of the Bill was adamant and unyielding. She addressed meetings in hundreds, distributed pamphlets by the thousands and thus organised and mobilised intelligent public opinion in favour of her Bill. Associations and public bodies voted addresses of welcome to her, appreciating her efforts at eradicating that national evil, accorded her a full measure their moral support. At long last the Bill was brought on the Statute Book. The forces of reform and progress emerged fully triumphant over the impotent wrath of enervating reactionarism. The Bill survived the parthian shafts of orthodoxy and became Law. And that is the magnum opus of Mrs. Muthulakshmi.

The political life of no other woman is half as crowded and busy as that of Doctor Muthulakshmi Reddi. It was not without justification that she hesitated to accept a seat in the Council when she was nominated thereto. A medical practitioner of fourteen years' standing, who had just returned from England after specialising in the diseases of women and children cannot be deemed to have consulted her interests, when she chose politics to the prejudice of her profession. And from a purely financial and professional point of view, it was a sacrifice that she made. A day of rest to her since

then has been a day that never dawns. Even Sunday is no Sabbath day for her. All through the year she has to attend conferences, now an All-India one, now a provincial one and now a district one—all women's conferences. All Asian Women's Conference too she has attended. And she attends most of them as a President or distinguished visitor. No Women's Conference in India seems to be complete without her ennobling and distinguished presence. Whenever she has no conferences to attend, she serves on committees. While a member of the Council, she served on several committees such as Health and Welfare Committees, Temperance Committee, Vigilance Committee, Social hygiene, Social reform and Social Service Committees. In addition she served on such purely women's committees such as the Women's Indian Association, the Muslim Ladies' Association, the Seva Sadan, the Children's Aid Society etc. Besides all these Mrs. Reddi was a member of the Hartog Committee on Indian Education and toured thoughout India. She has to read and digest all current publications both in English and in the vernacular to post herself with up-to-date information. A phone-call, by one, a personal call by another, advice for a third and a recommendation for a fourth—thus her whole time is divided and dedicated for public service alone. Amidst all this she has her family affairs too, to look after. Like Lady Astor she "seems to have the secret of perpetual motion and inexhaushtible animation. She rises early and retires late and whirls like a spinning wheel the whole time." A tale of woe wrings out tears from her eyes and moves her to mighty indignation. She never rests before she gives succour to the needy. She is too full of the milk of human kindness to speak a harsh word or evince an unkind expression. She is so tolerant of other people's opinions and convictions that she would always avoid wounding them, if she could. She would rather allow the Brahmin widows observe caste distinctions in a common institution like the Widows' Home than enforce the principle of equality on them and thus compel them to leave the institution and deny themselves the benefits thereof. Yet this considerateness does not deny her conviction for social equality. Rather, it is the tender-hearted weakness of a hyper-sensitive woman.

Dr. Muthulakshmi's views on women and their activities are unique and quite laudable. She does not want that women should be given university education, at any rate not the one that is imparted to-day, a purely literary one that produces misfits in life. But she wants that primary and higher education should be within the reach of every girl. She would seem to favour co-education as such but she complains that because men teachers neglect girl pupils the latter do not make much progress. The number of girls who take to such professions as medicine and teaching being very small, and the majority of girls being meant for home-life, she would fain

have the girls taught and trained up in such subjects as would make them efficient and intelligent housewives. It is also her fervent desire that women should be recruited to the Police ranks to deal with questions of women offenders Finally she appeals to such of those women as have education, experience and knowledge to enter into legislative bodies and render service to their country.

A sincere and strenuous worker Dr. Muthulakshmi has a very high sense of duty. Come what may, she will perform her duty strictly and scrupulously. She will plant herself at her post of duty and strive on and on "as ever in the great task-master's eye." She deems no sacrifice to be too big, if only she could satisfy her conscience that she has done her duty and done it well. On one occasion Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi attended the council and addressed it too on her resolution on the prevention of child marriage, although she was "suffering from a severe attack of influenza." That was not all. On the 31st January 1930—the day on which her most cherished amendments to the Suppression of Brothels Bill was to have been moved, a calamity overtook her. Suddenly a near and dear relation of hers—her father took seriously ill and became unconscious. Her presence was most necessary at the bedside. Not less imperative was her presence at her post of duty. Never was a struggle between filial duty and public duty keener than in her case. She had the most painful choice before her. And she chose the only course that a woman of her sincerity and public spirit could be expected to have chosen. She had to tear herself away from his bedside and with an indescribable pain and anguish of heart she went to the council that day. As ill-luck would have it her amendment was voted down and caused her no small disappointment and chagrin. Yet she managed to reap the greatest consolation at the thought that she had done her duty by the womanhood and that her father's spirit would bless her withall.

Mrs. Muthulakshmi's speeches are characterised by feeling and emotion. She speaks, not eloquently but with ease and fluency enough to please her hearers. You cannot find any tricks of rhetoric but you can certainly find the trace of sincerity pervading her whole speech. She is possessed of an admirable knowledge of facts and figures and marshals them all marvellously while she deals with matters like health, hygiene, education and womanhood. Her council speeches are a mine of information, if not models of oratory. At times she assumes a drolling tone and speaks in a dragging manner.

When Mahatma Gandhi was arrested by the Government in 1930, many were the Indians that resigned their places in the Legislatures and thus registered their protest against the Government's Act. Among them Dr. Muthulakshmi was one. She too resigned her Deputy Presidentship as well as her membership of the

Madras Council. And that was a tremendous sacrifice the magnitude of which is hard to gauge. Mrs. Reddi has an inordinate and passionate love for Mahatma Gandhi who in his turn is appreciative of her. Thus his arrest had a strong reaction on her heart and she instantly obeyed its dictates. Merely as a mark of protest and as a demonstration of India's self-respect her resignation might be applauded and admired. But from the point of view of practical politics it served no purpose. On the other hand, much more solid and substantial work that she could have continued to turn out from within the Legislature was made impossible. To love and be wise is an impossibility and the practical wisdom of that act born of sentimental love is therefore open to question.

With all that, the life of Mrs. Reddi is a life full of love and labour. It is a noble and selfless life dedicated to the service of her down-trodden sisters. Love's labour for its own sake was never performed more than by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi. It was given to her to inaugurate the political emancipation of women and exemplify it in her own life. Since then, she has been giving the Women's Movement in India such a turn and a direction as leave nothing to be desired. No wonder then that she has been elected as the honoured President of the Women's Indian Association, as a worthy successor to the late Dr. Besant. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi is a living link between the fast-dying generation of the slow-moving womanhood and the feverish generation of the freedom-loving flappers, that is coming into its own. As a reliable guide to the one and a respected leader to the other, she holds the balance between the two. A loving wife, an affectionate mother and an unselfish public worker, Mrs. Reddi is as near perfection as a mortal woman can be. She lives, moves and has her being only in the Women's movement in India. She lives for it and will die for it. She has set up an undying and inspiring example in her life for the members of her sex to admire and follow. When the history of Indian women's movement comes to be written, the historian will be constrained to give her and her activities a chapter by itself—by far the most interesting and illuminating one. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi has assured for herself a place of honour and prominence in the palatial Temple of Fame and in the people's hearts. Though not the greatest woman in India, Dr. Muthulakshmi is easily the best woman; and a nation that has produced her is a nation that can be proud!

By K. M. Balasubramaniam, B.A., B.L.,
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THE FACTORIES BILL*

A note written for the members of the All India Women's Conference, Women's Indian Association, forwarded with compliments to the Editor, Stri-Dharma, Madras.

The Factories Bill was passed on 19th July, 1934 and contains many improvements on previous legislation. It will actually come into force on January 1, 1935. Some of the valuable recommendations of the Whitley Commission (Royal Commission on Labour) have been enacted, and we would draw your attention to some of the clauses referring specially to women and children.

1. Maximum hours per week in perennial factories is 54.

2. In seasonal factories the maximum is 60 hours per week.

3. Women may not be employed except between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m.

4. For children the maximum is 5 hours per day, and they may only be employed between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. No child shall be allowed to work in a factory for more than five hours in any day. The hours of work of a child shall be so arranged that they shall not spread over more than seven and a half hours in any day. No child shall be allowed to work in a factory except between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. Provided that the Local Government may, by notification in the Local Official Gazette, in respect of any class or classes of factories and for the whole year or any part of it, vary these limits to any span of thirteen hours between 5 a.m. and 7-30 p.m.

The provisions of section 35 shall apply also to child workers, but no exemption from the provisions of that section may be granted in respect of any child.

No child shall be allowed to work in any factory on any day on which he has already been working in another factory.

5. A Register of child workers must be kept. The manager of every factory in which children are employed shall maintain a Register of Child Workers Showing:—

(*a*) the name of each child worker in the factory, (*b*) the nature of his work, (*c*) the group, if any, in which he is included (*d*) where his group works on shifts, the relay to which he is allotted (*e*) the number of his certificate of fitness granted under section 52, and (*f*) such other particulars as may be prescribed.

* NOTE—This Bill can be obtained at the Government of India Printing Press, Delhi.

The Local Government may make rules prescribing the form of the Register of Child Workers, the manner in which it shall be maintained, and the period for which it shall be preserved.

6. No woman or child shall be allowed to clean or oil any part of the machinery of a factory while that part is in motion under power, or to work between moving parts or between fixed and moving parts of any machinery which is in motion under power. The Local Government may, by notification in the local official Gazette, prohibit, in any specified factory or class of factories, the cleaning or oiling by any person of specified parts of machinery when these parts are in motion under power.

No woman or child shall be employed in any part of a factory for pressing cotton in which a cotton-opener is at work:

Provided that, if the feed-end of a cotton-opener is in a room separated from the delivery end by a partition extending to the roof, or to such height as the Inspector may in any particular case specify in writing, women and children may be employed on the side of the partition where the feed-end is situated.

7. Shelters for workers and rooms for children. The Local Government may also make rooms for children-rules—

(*a*) requiring that in any specified factory wherein more than fifty women workers are ordinarily employed, a suitable room shall be reserved for the use of children under the age of six years belonging to such women, and

(*b*) prescribing the standards for such rooms and the nature of the supervision to be exercised over the children therein.

8. Women, adolescents and children are protected from being employed in hazardous occupations.

Where the Governor-General in Council is satisfied that any operation in a factory exposes any persons employed upon it to a serious risk of bodily injury, poisoning or disease, he may make rules applicable to any factory or class of factories in which the operation is carried on—

(*a*) specifying the operation and declaring it to be hazardous, (*b*) prohibiting or restricting the employment of women, adolescents or children upon the operation, (*c*) providing for the medical examination of persons employed or seeking to be employed upon the operation and prohibiting the employment of persons not certified as fit for such employment and (*d*) providing for the protection of all persons employed upon the operation or in the vicinity of the places where it is carried on.

9. Children and adolescents must have certificates of fitness by a qualified doctor.

No child who has not completed his twelfth year shall be allowed to work in any factory. No child who has completed his twelfth year and no adolescent shall be allowed to work in any factory unless he has been granted a certificate of fitness under section 52 and, while at work in the factory, carries either the certificate itself or a token giving reference to it.

A certifying Surgeon shall, on the application of any young person who wishes to work in a factory, or of the parent or guardian of such person, or of the manager of the factory in which such person wishes to work, examine such person and ascertain his fitness for such work.

10. They must have the certificate or a token of it, with them while at work in the factory. An adolescent who has been granted a certificate of fitness to work in a factory as an adult, under clause (*b*) of sub-section (2) of section 52, and who, while at work in a factory, carries either the certificate itself or a token giving reference to it, shall be deemed to be an adult for all the purposes of Chapter IV.

11. For every factory sufficient latrines and urinals according to the prescribed standards, shall be provided for male workers and for female workers separately, of suitable patterns and at convenient places as prescribed and shall be kept in a clean and sanitary condition during all working hours.

12. In every factory a sufficient supply of water fit for drinking shall be provided for the workers at suitable places.

13. Prescribing physical standards for children and adolescents.

Prescribing the forms of certificates of fitness to be granted under section 52, providing for the grant of duplicates in the event of loss of the original certificates and fixing the fees which may be charged for such certificates and such duplicates.

CRITICISM

We regret however that there are some important points omitted that we should have been glad to see incorporated in this new act.

1. Age of children. The recommendation of the League of Nations is that the minimum age of child labourers should be 14, but the recommendation is not yet accepted by the Government of India.

2. No legislation has been made for enforcing maternity benefits.

Dr. R. D. Dalal (Legislative Debate Vol. VI, No. 2, P. 140) says:

> "This act does not touch the important questions of prohibition of employment of women in factories before and after child birth. Cessation of 4 weeks before and 4 weeks after confinement is absolutely necessary. If maternity benefit schemes be introduced, the objections will be less formidable."

3. No definite regulation has been made for welfare work and creches etc.

Dr. Dalal says:

> "Infant mortality attributable to the practice of married women engaging in factory works, amount to one-fifth of the total infant mortality.
>
> Compulsory provision of creches and day nurseries should be made."

4. No legislation has been enacted for the compulsory provision of schools for the children of factory workers and for child labourers.

5. The Whitley Commission recommended women factory Inspectors as desirable in every province. No mention of this is made in the act.

6. The Whitley Commission strongly recommended that every worker should be paid within 7 days of the period for which the wages are due. This is not yet made compulsory. They say: "our recommendation is that the law should insist on the payment of wages within 7 days from the expiry of the period in which they have been earned. (Report P. 241). The Committee also expresses its strong disapproval of fining labourers for small mistakes and attaching their future wages.

7. No reference has been made of payment of weekly wages as recommended by the Whitley Commission (Report P. 230).

"Our conclusion then is that the prevalence of a monthly period of payment is not in the best interest of the employees."

"We recommend the general adoption of a system of weekly payments in the belief that it will have important effects on both welfare and efficiency. The advantages to be gained are in our view so obvious and definite that the state would be justified in intervening to enforce a general adoption of weekly payments if this could be secured without a dislocation of Industry."

Monthly wages are still allowed to be paid with the result that most of the factory hands are deeply in debt by the end of the

month, and so, are in a way, tied down hand and foot to their employers. They dare not leave one factory to search for better terms of employment elsewhere—as they are entitled to do.

We can understand when there is a question of specialised work, where the workman has to be trained before he is fit for his job, safeguarding the interests of employers of this sort of labour should be borne in mind but ordinary labourers should not suffer from this grave disadvantage.

8. Fixing of maximum load for women recommended by the Whitley Commission has not been taken into consideration.

Annual register Vol. II 1931, Page 347 unregistered factories recommendations of Whitley Commission.

9. "A separate act, brief and simple, should be passed to apply to factories without power in machinery employing 50 or more persons during any part of the year."

Page 346 Labour Report.

10. "Jobbers should be excluded from the engagement and dismissal of labour" recommended by the Whitley Commission.

No mention of this is made in the act. It is very necessary that jobbers and "Naikins" should be excluded from the engaging and dismissal of labour.

Work for our members to do.

Note X 1.—W.I.A. & A.I.W.C. members should enquire what arrangements for supervision are made and whether they are adequate or not.

Note X 2.—W. I. A. and A. I. W. C. members should satisfy themselves that all hazardous processes are duly specified as such.

Note X 3.—Local Governments have the power to decide standards of health and fitness. W. I. A. and A. I. W. C. members should see that Local Governments base these standards on accurate anthropometrical data.

"The value of Anthropometrical data cannot be over-estimated. Height itself is not of much importance as it is in relation to weight. Height and weight are indications of nutrition.

I would suggest that each Province should appoint an Anthropometrical Committee for guidance of certifying Surgeons." (Dr. R. D. Dalal—Legislative debate, Vol. VI, No. 2, Page 140).

In addition to seeing that the Local Government does its duty, A.I.W.C. members can by personal visits to the factories and homes of the workers satisfy themselves that these new regulations are known to the workers, both children and adult and that they are being carried out.

In respect of restriction of drink sales the Labour Commission emphasised the importance of protection against the drink evil. "It was possible" they said "and in our opinion desirable that efforts should be made in all industrial centres to reduce the number of drink shops and to restrict the hours during which liquor may be sold."

We recommend our workers of making it a point to find out whether their Local Governments are acting according to this recommendation. If no efforts have been made to restrict the sale of liquor near industrial centres they should make a strong representation to their Local Governments and press for legislation in their local Councils. We suggest tea-shops and places of recreation should replace drink shops.

SHAREEFEH HAMID ALI.
JANET COPELAND.

WOMEN'S WORK IN NEW ZEALAND

By W. R. OAMARU

Greetings from the Women of New Zealand to their Indian Sisters.

Having been honoured with a request for an occasional short article on Women's Work in New Zealand, for the columns of Stri-Dharma, I think I cannot do better than commence with a phase of women's activity which has a distinctively New Zealand origin. It has for its motto, "To help the mothers and save the Babies."

This Organisation is called, The Royal New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children and its popular title is, "The Plunket Society" so called in honour of a former Governor-General, Lord Plunket, who was its first patron.

The main purpose of the society is to emphasise the responsibility of maternity and the duty of every mother to fit herself for the perfect fulfilment of the natural calls of motherhood, by the dissemination of information and the supply of trained nurses who give advice and assistance gratis to any mother in the Dominion who requires their services, thus conserving the health and strength of the rising generation.

These trained Plunket Nurses are stationed in various centres so as to be readily available whenever required and they have, in every centre, the backing and assistance of a local branch of the Society. In addition to this, a number of Baby Hospitals have been established throughout the Dominion under the control of the same organisation for the treatment of weakly infants and children suffering from malnutrition. The first of these Baby Hospitals was opened in a beautiful country house on the Karitane Peninsula,

belonging to Dr. Sir Truby King, who was the conceiver and organiser of the whole movement. The first Plunket Society and the first Karitane Hospital were founded in 1907 and in the intervening years have been established, not only throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand, but Plunket Societies, Karitane Hospitals and the name of their great founder, Sir Truby King, have become household words in many other countries. In looking over the Society's report I find that the idea has been copied and even the names, Plunket and Karitane adopted in England, America U.S., Australia, South Africa, Ceylon and China ; perhaps India will be the next.

Only a very cursory outline of the Society's methods and achievements can be given in a short article, but if further information is desired, I am quite sure that the Administrative Secretary, Miss G. Hoddinott, whose address is Queens Buildings, Princes Street, Dunedin will be pleased to supply it.

Although at the inception of the Society the infant death rate of New Zealand was one of the most favourable in the world, Dr. Sir Truby King was convinced that it was still too high and argued that by the diffusing of knowledge and more general recognition of infant requirements and maternal duties many more lives could be saved and the strength and vitality of the rising generation materially increased.

To describe in detail what the Society has accomplished would necessitate going into statistics beyond the scope of this article, suffice it to say that if the infantile death rate in New Zealand were as high to-day as it was twenty-two years ago the Dominion would be loosing 1,000 more babies in their first year than is now the case. In that brief period the following striking changes have been brought about :—

(1) The total death rate of infants in their first twelve months has been reduced to less than one half (*viz.*) from nearly 8 per cent to just over 3½ per cent.

(2) The death rate of infants in the period from one month to twelve months has been reduced to less than a quarter (*viz.*) from 5 per cent to just over 1 per cent.

(3) The death rate from infantile diarrhoea has been reduced to below an eighth—from upwards of 15 per thousand to less than 2 per thousand.

A wonderful achievement I think you will admit ; and it is quite safe to claim the credit for the Royal New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children.

To go into details of the Society's methods and general organisation would make too great a demand on your space, so

I will only repeat that exhaustive details are available on application to the source already indicated, and leave it at that.

The Women of New Zealand like their Indian Sisters, as shown in your great Women's Indian Association, are keenly interested in all movements that have for their object th moral and social uplift of humanity. In our own little Dominion she has none of the mighty problems that your Association has to grapple with. Our history as a national entity dates back barely one hundred years which is as a drop in the ocean compared with India's "millenia" of wonderful experience. Our population is a mere handful compared with India's teeming millions and we are not burdened as you are with the outworn customs and traditions of Ages. Yet she finds plenty of scope for her energies in keeping our ide s and social conditions in line with the ever developing demands of a New Age and a changing world.

At the present time there is ample scope for their philanthropic endeavours in assisting to combat the economic crisis which New Zealand, being a producing country, dependent upon overseas markets for the disposal of her primary products, is feeling just as actually as other parts of the world.

The Women of New Zealand, having for many years enjoyed the franchise on the same footing with the men, naturally take a keen interest and frequently an active part in public affairs, but strange to say, we have as yet, only one Woman Member of Parliament.

In addition to the institution with which this article deals there are other Women's Associations that are national in character, particularly the "Women's Institute of New Zealand" and the "National Council of New Zealand Women." With these I may deal, if opportunity offers, on some future occasion.

It may interest your readers to know that through the efforts of the New Zealand and India League, India's struggle for freedom is widely known among all classes in this Dominion and meets with ready and sincere sympathy, especially among your New Zealand Sisters.

OUR EUROPEAN LETTER

(From a Special Correspondent)

THE GENERAL SITUATION

He would be a foolishly bold man who would presume to judge the European situation at the moment. Recent events, important as they are in themselves, are likely to lead to consequences even more serious in their results to the peace of the world, in which the interests of India are so intimately involved.

Herr Hitler has his huge majority in Germany, confirming his position as Chancellor and Leader of the Third Reich. The destinies of the country are in his hands, and he wields more power than Bismarck ever had. What will he do with it? That is the question in the minds of the statesmen of all countries. Time alone will furnish the answer. But one thing appears certain in 12 month's time, Germany will practically be fully re-armed, with incalculable consequences to the balance of power in Europe. No one knows what Fascist Italy is going to do, and her policy appears to be inextricably mixed up with the point of view entertained by the Vatican, especially so far as Austria is concerned. France, though strong outwardly, is weak internally, and much depends upon whether Monsieur Doumergue can hold his Government together through the coming winter. She wants Soviet Russia to join the League of Nations, because she is afraid of Hitlerité Germany, and Soviet Russia wants peace on her Western borders, because she is anticipating an attack by Japan on her Far Eastern possessions. The Soviet press is full of attacks upon Japan, and eulogies of the Russian Far Eastern Army.

No longer is India able to visualise herself as an isolated problem in the world whose affairs are no concern of hers. Her destiny and that of her peoples, men and women alike, is bound up with the worlds' destiny. For instance, if war ever broke out in the Far East, say between Japan and Soviet Russia—the whole situtión so far as India is concerned, with regard to the White Paper and all that it implies of the future status of Indian women, would be altered inevitably. One thing is certain. The greatest factor making for world peace today is a strong and united British Empire.

A good deal is likely to be heard of Mr. Baldwin's recent statement in the House of Commons that Great Britain's frontier lies on the Rhine. Already controversy has arisen over the subject. It was not an "alarmist" statement, however. As Lord Howard of Penrith (a distinguished ex-Ambassador) points out in the *Spectator* last week:

"Surely, inasmuch as we, at Locarno, guaranteed from attack the eastern frontier of France and the western frontier of Germany, our frontier, so long as we mean to stick to our obligations, may be said to be practically on the Rhine."

WOMEN'S WORK IN RUSSIA

Whatever we may think of the political and social system of present-day Russia, we cannot withhold our admiration for some of the social services performed by Russian women in a spirit of voluntary self-sacrifice. Writing on this subject in the August number of the *Contemporary Review*, Miss M. E. Walker, in a reference to women in the medical profession, gives an instance of her own personal experience, of the courage and initiative shown by a young Ruasian girl medical graduate:

"There was one young girl, only recently qualified, who let me spend a morning in her modern dispensary, two hundred miles from the nearest town. Her practice stretched for some 60 miles to the east of her dwelling, and 40 to the west. Her only means of transport was a horse or the springless carts of a peasant. Yet there she was living alone with only the bare necessities of life, a minimum of the common drugs; and in the interval of doctoring stray pains, setting bones, extracting teeth, and bringing babies into the world, she acted as nurse to three cases—pneumonia, pernicious malaria and meningitis; she had installed these in a vacant room of her cottage, which she proudly called "my hospital". Her evenings were devoted to lecturing to the villagers on hygiene, first aid, sanitation, and preventive work against tuberculosis."

Miss Walker also states that women have, practically speaking the complete control of education in all Russia. In the Ministry of Education, nearly all the principal posts are held by women.

LONDON: 23-8-1934

SOCIAL REFORM

INDIAN WOMEN'S DISABILITIES

That all disabilities of women in regard to their standing for election to local bodies and provincial and central legislature be removed was one of the resolutions passed at the annual meeting of the Simla sub-constituent conference of the All-India Women's Conference last week.

Mrs. Hamid Ali, in her presidential address, stressed the need for the womanhood of India to make a special study of all literature pertaining to their education, advancement and welfare.

The first resolution, related to election of women to local bodies and central legislatures.

The second resolution emphatically supported the Bill for the suppression of immoral traffic in women and children, which was shortly to come up before the Punjab Legislature.

The third resolution appealed to all Municipalities in the province to follow the example of the Simla Municipality by appointing women doctors for the medical inspection and treatment of school-going girls and establishing special clinics for the efficient carrying on of this useful and essential work.

Another resolution welcomed the recent formation of the Ward Welfare Committee and called upon the women of Simla to come forward and offer voluntary help in this connection by house to house visits and such propaganda as lay within their power.

Other resolutions proposed the removal of the legal disabilities of Hindu women and the operation of Islamic law in the case of Muslim women instead of the customary law. They called upon Government to appoint a commission, with a strong representation of women on its personnel, forthwith in order to study and report on this question.

The Conference further welcomed the recent appointment by the Central Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference of a special sub-committee with Mrs. Hamid Ali as its convener for the purpose of doing intensive propaganda amongst the general public, establishing a central bureau and for seeking ways and means to secure necessary amendments to the existing Sarda Act, the provisions of which were being constantly broken.

The Conference, by another resolution, called upon the public to subscribe liberally towards the Establishment in Lahore of a Rescue Home for women and children for which the women of the Punjab were trying to raise funds.

The Conference, which was a representative gathering, was attended by about 400 women of different communities.

(Guardian).

INDIAN LADY HONOURED

Intimation has been received that Mrs. S. A. Hussain (Igballunissa Begum). B.A., Mysore Educational Service, who proceeded to England for higher studies in the Leeds University, has completed her course for Diploma in Education and passed the examination with distinction. She has thus been selected for the M.Ed. Degree.

She has been a good delegate to several of the Women's Conferences before she went to England and is the mother of 6 children.

She was presented to Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, President of the Girl Guides and made such a good impression on Lady Baden Powell, President of the Girl Guides, that she has been nominated as delegate to the International Conference of the Girl Guides of the World to be held in Switzerland from the 10th August. This is a unique honour as she will be the first Indian lady to be represented in the International Conference of Girl Guides of the World.

RESULTS OF ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN

Physical examination of all men before they can obtain a marriage license is the newest social promulgation for the United States. This is the unanimous opinion of more than 1,000 distinguished men and women delegates representing every section of the country just ending a four day session here on Marriage and Family Relations. Educators, physicians, delegates from national organizations of women, noted churchmen, and members of Health Associations crowded Teachers' College of Columbia University to proclaim that there must be a new deal for women before the marriage ceremony. The most vociferous speakers were women delegates from the recently organized Marriage Councils that have a wide membership in the big cities of the nation. There was no dissent to the verdict that ten per cent. of all men are sterile and that in taking on matrimony they are "leading women to a life of misery."

WHAT STERILE HUSBANDS DO

The nationally known physician Chairman of the United States Committee on Maternal Health advised the training of 100,000 marriage counsellors drawn from the medical profession to act under laws making compulsory a physical examination of all men seeking a marriage license so that "there would be plenty of time for the woman to find out what sort of a man she is about to

marry." The woman director of the Marriage Council of Philadelphia, with a membership of more than 10,000, asserted that the sterile husband blamed his wife, made her "life a hell on earth, became fretful, smashed the radio, kicked over chairs and provided a moody home." The law must step in to prevent marriages that meant only life long unhappiness to women who desired a domestic career and a home with children. In a convention about equally divided among the two sexes there was a common voice that the sterile bridegroom must depart from civilization. Committees were appointed for the 48 States in the Union to begin a movement for the enactment of rigid laws on medical examination of all men before marriage.

The importance of this social adventure comes from the fact that the assemblage represented what might be called the cream of both wealth and intelligence in the various organized societies of the country. More than 100 organizations of women sent delegates. The medical and the legal professions provided some of their most brilliant men. Health associations had their delegates there to approve. Adequate funds were immediately subscribed for national organization. There was rolling applause when one of the most distinguished physicians in the country asserted that the lives of not less than 100,000 brides annually were being ruined by the lack of compulsory examination laws. Judging from the expressions of clergymen who attended there will be little if any opposition to the movement from the Protestant denominations and thus the country seems started on a few years of intense agitation among the several States to enact the suggested laws. *This sudden and concentrated venture comes from the enormous activity of women in many social fields since they won the franchise. They have forced pensions for indigent widows, modified old age security, free dental clinics for school children, day nurseries for babies whose mothers have to work and many other social changes.*

THE LAWS AND THE PARROT

A courageous and sympathetic jurist, not much concerned with the actual requirements of law, has just stepped in to force the burial of a parrot in a cemetery. This fifty year old bird, which could speak English. German and French had been the pet for two generations of a wealthy woman and when her will was opened it was found she had directed her executor to chloroform Polly. "Bury her at the foot of my grave" was the further injunction but the cemetery authorities objected to this proceeding. The judge in a learned decision, from the human if not the legal viewpoint, held that all the testimony showed that the parrot had been as a child to the testatrix, had been unusually affectionate for half a century

while in the ownership of a childless woman; that she wanted it chloroformed because she thought the bird would die of grief and that there was no desecration of the cemetery by interment of the bird at the foot of the grave.

BRANCH REPORTS

VIZAGAPATAM

The Seventh Anniversary of the Women's Indian Association, Vizagapatam Branch took place on 26-8-34 in the Town Hall under the Presidentship of Digumurthi Ramalakshmiamma garu of Narsapur.

The meeting was well attended by the ladies of Vizagapatam. After the proposal of the President to the chair by Mrs. M. Venkarama garu seconded by Mrs. A. Venkataratuamma garu a prayer song was sung in Hindi. There was also an entertainment on Veena by some of the members. The president then opened the proceedings thanking the Association for the honour they bestowed on her and assuring them of her help towards the benefit of the Association. She was very glad to see the progress being made by the association inspite of the various difficulties and wished it every success.

Then the report of the association was read by the joint secretary, Mrs. V. Choodikuduthamma garu. Mrs. G. Sivakanthamma garu spoke about Women's Franchise, Mrs I. Satynarayrnamma garu spoke about religion. Mrs. B. Rageswaramma garu then related the History of the association and begged the ladies to take more active part in bringing the association to greater heights. The election of new office-bearers for the new year was postponed to a future occasion as there was no time.

The President in concluding exhorted the ladies of Vizagapatam to take greater part in activities of public life and support and strengthen the cause of women.

The function came to a happy close with a proposal of a vote of thanks to the President of the occassion by Mrs. M. Venkamma garu.

After the function was over the members had the benefit of a health picture dealing on Malaria organised by the Municipality specially for the occassion.

BOMBAY

The Bombay branch of the Women's Indian Association celebrated their 17th Anniversary on the 2nd October 1934 at the Theosophical Hall. Mrs. S. D. Saklatvala presided on the occasion. Prizes were distributed to 24 successful women students of the Fort Free Training Classes by Mrs. Saklatvala. The students gave a fine display of physical culture and music, which was much

appreciated. A small sketch for Home Hygiene was also prepared, which was unique in its origin.

In November last, Mrs. B. C. Jalundhwala presided for our gathering and distributed the Elementary and Intermediate Drawing Certificates to six women, who passed the Art's School Examination.

MRS. HERABAI A. TATA,
Hon. Secretary, W. I. A., Bombay Branch.

GRIT.

Somebody said that it couldn't be done.
But she with a chuckle replied
That "may be it couldn't," but she wouldn't be one
Who would say so until she had tried.
So she buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On her face. If she worried, she hid it.
She started to sing as she tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and she did it.

Somebody scoffed, "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least, no one ever has done it,"
But she took off her coat and she took off her hat,
And the first thing we knew she'd begun it.
With the lift of her chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
She started to sing as she tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and she did it.

There are thousands to tell you it couldn't be done;
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point to you one by one
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Then take off your coat and go to it.
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Coming Elections :—

Before another issue goes to the press, we shall know the result of the Elections to the Assembly. This Election is of great importance and interest for various reasons. Chief of these is that after long years of withdrawal and passivity the Congress if once again in the field to participate actively in the Legislatures, and the country will be called upon to decide whom they shall have as their representatives. We may here quote Mahatma Gandhi's advice to Electors, as the best guide in making their decision. He says: 'would like electors to consider, not persons but the principles which the institution they represent embody.' Specially to the women voters, we would offer this same advice. As women we stand, above all other things, for social reconstruction and the complete removal of all disabilities due to sex, race, class, creed or religion. To those candidates, who will work for these reforms and stand for these principles, which we have laid down in our Manifesto and which we have sent to every candidate, let the women's votes be given. Whether actively working or in the seclusion of our homes or in obscurity, we must realise that the degredation of woman is the ruin of humanity and the death knell of true progress and so let our voice be unanimous not only in what we shall demand, but in whom we shall support by our votes to become our representatives in every legislative and public assembly. We must not let the men exploit our vote. We must make ourselves intelligently well informed and make our own decision. Only the right use of what has been gained, meagre and inadequate; as it may, will lead to greater achievement; and so to thewomen all over India we send this call. Let them realise that their voice may be instrumental in doing immense good or immense harm. No matter what the party they stand for those candiates who will stand for our manifesto must have our vote. The manifesto has already been published in a previous issue of this magazine. A similar manifesto issued by the All-India Women's Conference is also published here :

Manifesto submitted by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference to all Candidates seeking election to the Central Legislature.

In as much as the All-India Women's Conference firmly believes that no real progress in our country is possible without educational and social reform, the Conference, hereby declares that its members will give their votes and active support in the coming elections to those candidates who are willing to devote particular attention to all questions as specially affect the welfare of women and children.

The Conference stands unequivocally for communal unity, the removal of untouchability, universal, free and compulsory primary education, the abolition of child marriage and suppression of immoral traffic in women and children, the immediate removal of sex disqualifications which deny to women their inherent right of full citizenship, the immediate removal of legal disabilities under which women suffer, the amelioration of the conditions of men and women labourers, the abolition of child labour, the provision of adequate facilities for and extension of medical aid, especially in rural tracts etc. In short, the Conference ardently desires the removal of all such customs and legal educational and social disabilities as deny to women or to any particular class or community equal opportunities and facilities for free and unfettered service and moral, material and physical advancement.

The Vigilance Association:

The report of the Vigilance Association is very interesting. The Hon. Secretary and Committee deserve not only congratulations but active support of all those who are interested in seeing society cleansed of one of its foulest diseases. Though so much fine work has been done, far more than we can contemplate remains to be done. This traffic in the souls of innocent and misguided women and girls is a treble crime. It is a crime against society, the individual and God. We agree that it is worse than useless to close brothels if there is no organised attempt to provide suitable Homes for those who are turned adrift. It was because we felt this necessity that the Women's Indian Association have started their Rescue Home. The experience of a few short months have brought home to us how cruel the fate of these poor girls is, and how often than not they are the victims of profiteers and poverty. Society must take cognisance of every form of need and make a co-ordinated attempt to remove the vicious social practices that are the cause of misery and want and degradation and also to succour those who are suffering, if it will be clean, healthy and progressive. It is also the duty of the state and public bodies not only to generously support all such work but to initiate and provide the necessary Homes etc. We trust that the Government of Madras will follow the example of the other provinces, such as Bombay and Calcutta and provide a liberal sum in their budget for this great and noble work.

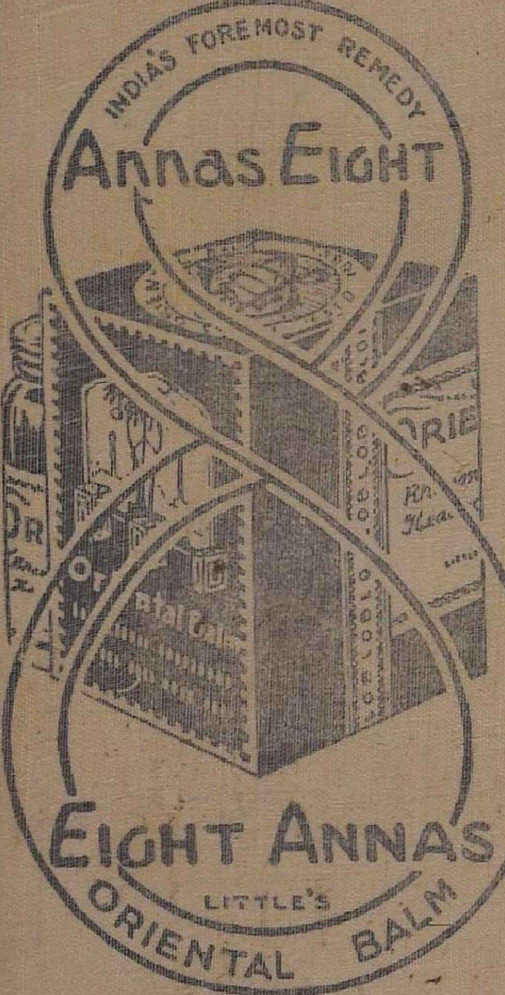
Women Elected to Municipal Board:

Two women, Mrs. Nathaniel and Mrs. Kanni Ammal have been successful in their election to the Vellore Municipality. We offer them our hearty congratulations and hope that more and more women will be returned day by day.

Legal Disabilities of Women:

The intolerable inequalities that the law imposes, specially on Hindu Women, and on women in general are a blot on civilisation. The invidious and subordinate position that is given to the woman strikes at the very root of progress and peace. Because so long as there are any unjust laws that discriminate between human beings, just because of their sex, no normal and happy adjustment is possible. Economic freedom is the basic factor for every other kind of freedom. The woman, who has no means of her own, or rights to hold property and money and decide for herself what she shall do with her own, cannot have any freedom that is worth the name. In marriage laws too the law is most cruelly unjust to the Hindu woman. This matter, we feel needs immediate looking into and thorough revision. Indian states have set a fine example in this direction. We support and join in the request of the A. I. W. C. asking the Government to appoint a non-official commission with a proportionate numbers of women members to enquire and report on that vital issue. We trust that Government of India will seriously consider this matter and give immediate effect to this just request of the organised women of the country.

Little's Oriental Balm



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HINDI

मदरास में श्रीमती सरोजिनी देवी।

मदरास में श्रीमती सरोजिनी देवी का आना आंधी की तरह जबरदस्त था। सरोजिनी देवी का नाम हिन्दुस्तान में ही नहीं, बल्कि सारे यूरोप में फैला हुआ है। उनकी कवितायें लोकप्रिय हो गई हैं।

साथ ही उन्होंने राजनैतिक क्षेत्रमें भी बड़ी नामवारी पायी है। वे कुछ कालतक कांग्रेस की अध्यक्षा रह चुकी हैं। सत्याग्रह के आन्दोलन में तीन चार बार जेल भी हो आयीं हैं। वे गांधीजी के प्रिय जनों में एक हैं, हर काम में वे उनका हाथ बँटाती हैं और उनके हाथ बहुत आदर भी पाती हैं।

विमनस इण्डियन असोसियेषन ने सरोजिनी को अपने सत्रहवें वार्षिकोत्सव केलिये अध्यक्षा चुना था। ता. ११ आगस्त शनिवार को सबेरे श्रीमती सरोजिनी देवी बँगलूर एक्स्प्रससे मदरास आ पहुँची। स्टेशन पर असोसियेषन की कई महिलायें और कांग्रेस के प्रमुख कार्यकर्ताओं ने उसका धूमधाम से स्वागत किया। उस दिन शाम को पांच बजे असोसियेषन के बाग में बडे बट वृक्ष के नीचे उसके वार्षिकोत्सव की सभा हुई। शहर की भद्र महिलायें काफ़ी संख्या में उपस्थित हुईं।

अध्यक्ष महोदया श्रीमती सरोजिनी देवी का बड़ा गम्भीर तथा मनोहर भाषण हुआ। आवाज़ सुरीली थी। तिसपर बीच २ में देवीने कुछ २ हास्य की बातें कहीं कि लोग सुनकर आनन्द के वश हो लोटपोट हो गये। भाषण वाहवाही के साथ खतम हुआ।

उन्होंने कहा कि स्त्रियां सब तरह से पुरुषों के बराबर होने लायक हैं। लेकिन वह समानता पाने केलिये स्त्रियों को और भी ज्यादह काम करना चाहिये। घर के कामकाज़ में कितनी ही निपुणता पाई हो तो भी, सार्वजनिक कामों में बिना भाग लिये वह बराबरी नहीं पा सकती। आजकल स्त्रियों केलिये कई सार्वजनिक काम मौजूद हैं। अनाथ बालक बालिकाओं का रुदन, बाल विधवाओं की दर्द भरी आहें, अपढ़ जनता की

बेकार जिन्दगी, ये सब देश को ऊँचा उठने से रोकती हैं। इन अड़चनों से छुटकारा पाने केलिये हमारी देश माता पढ़ी-लिखी तथा परोपकारी स्त्रियों के मुख की ओर सतृष्ण आँखों से ताक रही है। देश के बडे बड़े आन्दोलन स्वदेशी-प्रचार और हरिजनों का उद्धार काफ़ी उत्साह न पाकर कमज़ोर पडे हुए हैं। अगर स्त्रियाँ ज्यादह संख्यामें देश और समाज के सार्वजनिक कामों में पुरुष के बराबर भाग लें तो, हमारा देश, समाज़ तथा मज़हब, ऊँची से ऊँची पदवी को निस्सन्देह प्राप्त हो।

अंत में सरोजिनीने असोसियेषन की प्रशंसा करती हुई कहा कि एक सभा का चिरकाल तक जिन्दा रहना उसकी उपयोगिता की पहिचान है और मैं इस सभा की इस विशेषता से बहुत प्रसन्न हूँ। यद्यपि भिन्न २ प्रान्त तथा जाति और मज़हब की महिलायें इस सभा की सदस्या बनी हैं तो भी आपस के जातिपान्ति के झगडे से अलग रहकर परस्पर स्नेह के साथ बर्ताव करती आ रहीं हैं।

इसलिये इस सभा के द्वारा सिर्फ हिन्दुस्तान की स्त्रियों का आपस में मिलाप ही नहीं बल्कि सारे युरोप की स्त्रियों का भी सांगत्य हिन्दुस्तानी स्त्रियों से बना आ रहा है।

ता. १२ आगस्त एतवार की शाम को समुद्रतट के तिलक घाट पर काँग्रेस के प्रचार केलिये, एक बडी भारी सभा हुई। भीड़ बहुत थी। स्त्रियाँ भी काफी संख्या में आयीं थीं। सभापति श्रीयुत सत्यमूर्तिजीने सभासदों को श्रीमतीजी का परिचय देते हुए एक छोटासा भाषण दिया। उसके बाद सरोजनी देवी का करीब दो घण्टे तक धारा-वाहिक रूप में उत्तम भाषण हुआ था। व्याख्यान इतना जोरदार, इतना मनोहर था कि, लोग निस्तब्ध सुनते रहे। सरोजनी की सुरीली आवाज़ दूर तक सुन पड़ती थी। समुद्र की लहरों की आवाज़ उससे टकर खाकर वापस चली जाती थी। उन्होंने अपने व्याख्यान में कांग्रेस कार्य-क्रम के कई प्रश्नों पर विचार किया और अन्य कई विशेष बातें कहीं।

सोमवार को सबेरे गोखले हाल में नवयुवकों की सभा हुई। उस दिन के व्याख्यान का विषय समाज सेवा था। भाषण बहुत जोशीला था। इस में संदेह नहीं है कि उस दिन सरोजिनी देवी का भाषण सुनकर हर एक नवयुवक का मन नई जान और साहस से भर गया।

सोमवार के शाम मदरास कार्पोरेषन ने सरोजनी देवी को एक अभिनन्दन पत्र समर्पित किया । कार्पोरेषन का समारंभ गम्भीर और बड़ा शानधार था ।

यद्यपि देवीजी मदरास में कुल तीन ही दिन रहीं, उन्होंने बहुत काम किया था । कई जगहों में उनके भाषण हुए उन्होंने कीन मेरी कालेज, सारदा विद्यालया, विद्योदया आदि कई स्त्रियों की संस्थाओं का निरीक्षण किया । दक्षिण भारत हिन्दी प्रचार सभा के कार्यालय में भी पधारी तथा उसके कार्यों से परिचित होकर कार्यकर्ताओं का उत्साह बढ़ाया ।

मदरास की विद्यार्थिनियों में संगीत आदि ललित कलाओं की वृद्धि देखकर वे बहुत प्रसन्न हुईं । मदरास की युवतियों के लिये श्रीमतीजी का खास सँदेशा यह है कि वे सँगीत आदि कलाओं में उन्नति करती हुई भारतीय संस्कृति की रक्षा करें तथा देश को उज्ज्वल बनानेवाली नारीरत्न बन जायँ ।

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TAMIL

ஸ்திரீ தர்மம் 1934-ம் ௵ அக்டோபர் ௴

போர்க்கோலம் பூண்ட பூவையர்கள்

I. சாந்த்பீபி

மிஸிஸ் மூர்த்தி

(சென்றமாத தொடர்ச்சி)

முதலில் அரசி ஒன்றும் புரியாது தியங்கினள். பின்னர் அவர்கள் பேசும் வார்த்தைகளால் தனக்குத் தெரியாமற் சில சூதுகள் அரண்மனையில் நடந்திருக்கின்றனவென்று ஊகித்து அவையனைத்தும் கிஷர்கானே செய்கிறானென்றும் அறிந்துகொண்டாள். ஆனால் அதன் உண்மையை உடனே விளக்கக் காட்ட, தக்க ஆதாரமில்லாமல் மௌனமாகத் தன் அறைக்குள்ளேயே இருக்கலானாள். இப்ராஹிமும், மற்றும் திலவர்கான், கிஷர்கான் முதலானபேர்கள் ஒன்றுகூடி அப்பாஸ்கான் கையிலிருந்த கடிதத்தை படித்துப்பார்த்து அரசியை குற்றவாளியெனத் தீர்மானித்தனர். அப்பாஸ்கான் தன்னால் தன் வளர்ப்பு அன்னைக்கு அப்பழி வரலாயிற்றேயெனவும், தன் எண்ணம் பொய்யுரையானது பற்றியும் ஏங்கி வருந்தி தன் அறை நோக்கி நடக்கலானான்.

மறுநாள் கிஷர்கானும், சில சேவகர்களும் அரசியின் அறைக்குள் நுழைந்தனர், கிஷர்கான் மெதுவாக அரசியை அழைத்து கடிதத்தை நீட்டினான். அதில் அரசியை சிறைப்படுத்தப் போவதாக வரைந்திருந்தது. அரசன் உத்தரவை படித்தனள். சாந்த்பீபி சிறிதும் கலங்கினளில்லை. அவள் சிறைப்படுவதுபற்றி வருத்தமுமில்லை. ஆனால் பிஜப்பூருக்கு அழிவுவருமேயெனப் பீதியடைந்தனள். இளவரசனோ, எருப்பார்கைப் பிள்ளையாய்விட்டான். பொன்னுலகென விளங்கும் பூமியே! புகழ்மிகுந்த பிஜப்பூரே!! அலி அடில்ஷாவின் அருமை நாடே!!! அன்னியர் கைக்குள்ளகப்பட்டு அழிவுறும் நாள் அடுத்ததோ? பெருமை ததும்பிய பிஜப்பூரே! மகிமை நிரம்பிய மாநிலமே!! இந்திய திலகமே!!! உன் நாட்டு மக்களுக்கு நல்லறிவை நல்குவாயாக என புலம்பிக்கொண்டு சிறைச்சாலைக்குப் போகத் தயாரானாள். அன்றே சதாரா பிரதேசத்துக்கு பீபியை அழைத்தேகினர்.

சாந்த் இருண்ட கோட்டையிலடைப்பட்டு கிடப்பினும், அவள் மனம் பிஜப்பூரிலேயே இருந்தது. கொடியவர்களான திலவர்கான், கிஷர்கான் இவர்களுடைய ஆட்சிக்குட்பட்ட பிஜப்பூர் ஜனங்களுக்கு நன்மைவர ஆண்டவனைத் தொழுதவண்ணமாக இருந்தாள்.

இஃது இவ்வாறாக பிஜப்பூரில் அரசியில்லாததால் பெருங் கலகங்கள் நேரிடலாயின. கிஷர்கான் இளவரசனை பொம்மைபோலாக்கிவிட்டான். அதிகாரமனைத்தும் தன் கைக்குள்ளாக்கினான். அதிகாரம் அதிகமாகவே அகங்காரமும் குடிகொண்டது. குடிஜனங்களில் சிலரைத் துன்புறுத்தினான். அவ்வினத்தில் அபிஸீனியரும் ஒருவரானார்கள். அதனால் அவ்வகுப்பைச் சார்ந்த எக்லஸ்கான்,

கிஷர்கானை எதிர்த்து போருக்குச் சித்தமானான். அவன் முன்னிற்க இயலாது கிஷர்கான் தப்பி ஓடலானான். எக்லஸ்கான் அத்தருணம் பார்த்து இவன் வஞ்சகச்செயல்களையும், எண்ணங்களையும், நிரபராதியான அரசியை இவன் இந்நிலைமைக்குக் கொண்டுவந்த விஷயங்களையும் தக்க ஆதாரத்தோடு விளக்கிக்காட்டினான். மேலும் பீபியின் மேலான குணங்களையும் எடுத்தோதினான்.

இதுகாறும் நடந்த விஷயங்களின் உண்மையை நன்கறிந்த இளவரசன் கிஷர்கானைச் சிறைசெய்யவும் இராணியை சிறைமீட்கவும் அனுமதிகொடுத்தான். ஆனால் கிஷர்கான் ஓடிவிட்டதால் பிடிக்க இயலாதுபோயிற்று. பின்னர் இப்ராஹிம் எக்லஸ்கானை முதல் மந்திரியாக வைத்து, அரசியையும் ஆலோசனை கேட்டு இராஜ்ய காரியங்களை முன்போல அவளிடமே ஒப்புவித்தான். சீர்குலைய ஆரம்பித்தநாட்டை சிறிதுநாளுக்குள் முன்னைய நிலையையடையச்செய்தாள் பீபி. கிஷர்கான் மூர்த்துஷாவின் ஆட்களால் கொல்லப்பட்டான்.

திலவர்கானுக்கு, எக்லஸ்கானைக் கொன்று தான் முதல் மந்திரிபதவியை அடையவேண்டுமென ஆசை உண்டாயிற்று. ஆகையால் ஒருவருக்குமறியாது தந்திரமாகக் கொலைபண்ண ஏற்பாடு செய்தான். அவ்வாறு எக்லஸ்கான் கொலையுண்டிறக்கவே திலவர்கானின் கொடுஞ்செயலையறியாத அரசி அவனையே மந்திரிப்பதவியில் நியமித்தாள்.

திலவர்கானுக்கு முதல் மந்திரிப்பதவி கிடைக்கவே அவன் முன் அபுல் பாஜனுக்கு வாக்களித்தபடிச்செய்யத் தூதனுப்பினான். அக்பரிடம் பிஜப்பூரைச் சேர்க்கும் வழியைத் தேடுகிறானென்ற செய்தியைக் கேள்வியுற்ற சாந்த்பீபி அவனைச் சிறைசெய்ய அனுமதியளித்தாள். இதனை அறிந்த திலவர்கான் அகமத் நகருக்கு ஓடிவிட்டான். ஆனால் அவன் அவ்விடத்திலேயும் இராஜ துரோகம் செய்யத்தொடங்கவே காட்டிற்குத் துரத்தப்பட்டான். அப்போது தற்செயலாக கண்ட அப்பாஸ்கான் திலவர்கானைப் பிடித்து அரசிமுன்பாகக் கொண்டு வந்தான். ஆனால் திலவர்கான் தன் குற்றங்களைச் சொல்லி மன்னிப்புக் கேட்டதால் கொலைக்குத் தப்பிச் சிறைச்சாலைக்குக் கொண்டுபோகப்பட்டான்.

பின்னர் இளவரசனும் சாந்த்பீபியும் ஒற்றுமையாகயிருந்து இராஜ்ய காரியங்களை சரிவர பார்த்துவரலாயினர். நாடும் செழித்து நன்மையடைந்திருந்தது. ஆனால் அவள் தாய்நாடான அகமத் நகரத்தில் பெரும்போர்கள் நடந்துகொண்டிருந்தன. அதாவது 'புர்ஹான், நைஸாம்ஷா திடீரென்று இறந்துவிட்டான். அவன் 'மகன் இப்ராஹிம் அரசுகட்டிலேறினான்.' அவனும் ஆறுமாதகாலத்துக்குள் அரன்பதிக்கேகலானான். அவனுக்கு ஒரு சிறு குழந்தையிருந்தது. முறைப்படி அகமத் நகரம் அக்குழந்தைக்கேயுரியது. ஆனால் மீயன்மூன்ஜூ, 'அகமத் என்னும் பெயருள்ள ஒருவனை அரசனாக்கி அக்பர் படையெடுப்பை எதிர்நோக்கி இருந்தான். இதனால் முறைப்படி அரசுக்குரியவனின் படைகளும் மீயனுக்குவேண்டிய படைகளும் அடிக்கடி சண்டைபோட்டதால் குடிகள் ஆறாத்துயருக்காளானார்கள். சாந்த்பீபி இவ்விஷயங்களை அறிந்து அகமத் நகரை காத்தல் தனது கடமையெனக் கருதினாள்.

இப்படியிருக்க அக்பர் மகனான 'மூராத், இதுவே தருணமென ஒரு பெருஞ் சேனையுடன் ராஜா அலியையும் தன்னுடன் சேர்த்துக்கொண்டு அகமத் நகரம் நோக்கிப்புறப்படலானான். இவர்கள் வருகையை அறிந்த அகமத் நகரக் குடிகள் சாந்த்பீபியிடம் வந்து அடைக்கலம் புகுந்தனர். என்தாயே! வீர

லக்ஷ்மியே!! நீங்கள் இப்போது உதவாதுபோனால் உங்கள் தாய்நாடு பாழ்படும் என மன்றாடினர். இதைக்கேட்ட அரசியார் வீராவேசத்துடன், சொல்லொணாத்தைரியங்கொண்டு தன் கடமை பஹாதூரைக் காப்பதேயென்று பெண்புலியெனக் கூறினாள். உடனே படைவீரரை அழைத்து அப்பாஸ்கானை அதற்குத் தலைவனாக்கினாள். பின்னர் யாவரும் அகமத் நகரம் நோக்கி பிரயாணமாயினர். அங்கு சென்றதும் பீபி உட்நாட்டுப் படைகளைச் சிறப்புற வகுத்தனள். ஒவ்வொரு வகுப்பிற்கும் தலைவனை ஏற்படுத்தினாள். ஒவ்வொருவருக்கும் ஒவ்வொரு நிலையான இடங்களைக் கொடுத்தாள். "வீரர்களின் கடமை புறங்காட்டாது ஆயுள்பரியந்தம் தாய்நாட்டுக்காக உழைப்பதுவே உயர்வான நோக்கம், எவ்விதப் பதவியை இழக்க நேரினும், உயிரே போகும் தருவாயிலாயினும் உண்மை இரத்தம் தேகத்தின் எல்லா நரம்புகளிலும் ஓடிக்கொண்டிருக்குமாயின் தாய்நாட்டுக்கு தன் உயிரை அற்பணம் செய்வதே வீரத்தன்மையென மொழிந்தனள். இதனைச் செவியுற்ற போர்வீரர் ஊக்கங்கொண்டு நின்றனர். உணவுப்பொருட்களையும் தயாராக்கினாள். கோட்டை மதில்களை பழுதுபார்த்து சீர்திருத்த ஏற்பாடு பண்ணினாள். தன்னோடு அன்புடைய மற்ற அரசர்களுக்கு தனக்கு உதவி புரியும்படி தூதனுப்பினள்.

மூராத் அகமத்நகரை நெருங்கினான். அந்நகரைச் சுற்றித் தன் படைவீரரை நிறுத்தினான். வெளியிலிருந்து யாதொரு உதவியும் பெறாதபடி சேனைகளைக் காவல்வைத்தான். பின்பு மதிலை இடிக்கத்தக்க பீரங்கிகளை பிரயோகித்தான்.

மூராத்தையும் அவன் சேனையையுங்கண்டு பீபி சிறிதும் கலங்கினாளில்லை. என்றாலும் அகமத் நகர் ஜனங்களுக்குச் சேதம் வருமென எண்ணி மூராத்துக்கு சமாதானத்தைக் கோரி ஒரு கடிதம் வரைந்தனுப்பினாள். ஆனால் அவன் அதனைக் கவனியாது காரியத்தின்மீது கண்ணாயிருந்தான். இப்ராஹிம், பீபிக்கு உதவியாக இருமுறைப் படைகளை அனுப்பியும் அவை மொகலாயரோடு எதிராக நிற்கமாட்டாது தோல்வியடைந்து திரும்பின.

சாந்த்பீபியின் சேனைகள் கோட்டைக்குள்ளும் மூராத் சேனைகள் வெளியிலும் நின்று பீரங்கிகளை சரமாரியாகப் பொழிந்தன. மூராத்துக்கு ஒரு அடியும் முன்னால் எடுத்துவைக்க இயலவில்லை. அரசி தன் படைகளைக்கொண்டு வெகு தைரியத்துடன் எதிர்த்தாள். சுமார் நான்கு மாதம் வரையிலும் முற்றுகை நடந்தது. உணவுப்பொருள்களெல்லாம் தீர்ந்துவிட்டன. ஆயுதங்கள் குறையலாயின. இடைவிடாப் போரால் வீரர்களும் மனத்தளர்வுற்றனர். உடல் அயர்ந்தன, நாவரண்டன. நீஹங்கான் என்னும் படைவீரன் தவிர வேறு துணையில்லை. அக்காலத்திலும் பீபி ஒருத்தியே வீரமங்கையாய் தீரதிலகமாய் விளங்கினாள். வெற்றியடையலாமென்னும் உறுதியைக்கொண்டாள். ஆவேசம் பொங்கியது. அவள் உடைவாளுடன் அங்குமிங்கும் சுற்றி வீரர்களே! தீரர்களே!! சூரர்களே!!! எழுமின் யுத்தம் செய்மின், உயிர் உள்ளளவும் போர்புரியுங்கள். இறக்க நேரின் புகழுடன் இறவுங்கள், ஜெய்க்கநேரின் புகழுடன் தங்கள் நாட்டை காப்பாற்றியவராவோம். இதுவே எனது நோக்கம். மனைவிமக்களை அடிமையாக்கி கொடுமைக்காளாக்கபோகிறீர்களா? அன்னமிட்ட வீட்டை கன்னவைக்கத் துணிகின்றீர்களா? பால் குடித்த வீட்டை பகைவர் கையில் கொடுக்கிறீர்களா? உயிர் போவதை நினைக்கிறீர்களா? ஆறிலும் சாவு நூறிலும் சாவு இவ்வுலகில் உடல் நிலையில்லாத பொருள். பிறந்தவர் இறப்பதுண்மையென எச்சரிக்கையோடு

மொழிந்தனள். உடனே வீரர்கள் ஊக்கத்தோடு பன்மடங்கு எதிரியைத் தாக்கினர்.

முதலில் மூராத், பீபியின் படைவீரர் தனக்குப் பணிந்துவிடுவார்களென எண்ணினான். ஆனால் நினைத்ததற்குமாறாக நடக்கவே தந்திரத்தால் கைப்பற்ற முயற்சிக்கலானான். அதற்காக அகமத் நகரக்கோட்டை மதிலின் கீழ் மூன்று சுரங்கங்களைத் தோண்டி அவற்றின் நிறைய மருந்தை நிரப்பி நள்ளிரவில் தீ கொளுத்த ஏற்பாடு பண்ணினான். இதனைக் கேள்வியுற்ற அப்பாஸ்கான் அரசியிடம் விஷயத்தைச் சொல்லவே அரசி அச்சுரங்கங்கள் நிறைய சுண்ணாம்பை நிரப்பச் சொன்னாள். ஆனால் வேலை ஆட்கள் மூன்று சுரங்கங்களிருப்பதையறியாமல் இரண்டென நினைத்து அவைகளில் பரப்பினர். மூராத் மூன்றும் சுரங்கத்தைக் கொளுத்த அனுமதி கொடுத்தான். உடனே சுரங்கம் வெடித்து கோட்டை மதிலில் ஒரு சிறிதுபாகம் இடிந்தது. அதன் வழியாகப் பகைவர் கோட்டைக்குள் நுழைந்தனர். உடனே பீபி வாளை உருவிக்கொண்டு மற்ற வீரர்களைப் பின்னுக் நிறுத்தி மூராத்தின் சேனைகளை எதிர்த்தாள். அவைகள் சின்னபின்னமாகி ஓடின. அகமத் நகரம் பகைவரிடமிருந்து காப்பாற்றப்பட்டது. அமைதி நிலை கொண்டது. பஹதூரை அரசகட்டிலேற்றி சாந்த்பீபி பிரதிநிதியாக அரசபுரிய ஆரம்பித்தாள்.

மூராத் தன் சேனையோடு காண்டேஷுக்குத் திரும்புகையில் மிகுதியாகக் குடித்தமையால் இறந்தான்.

திரும்பவும், அக்பர் தானே தக்ஷணத்தைக் கைப்பற்ற எண்ணி படையெடுத்தான். அச்சமயம் மகமத்கான் என்னும் மந்திரி சாந்த்பீபியைக் கொன்று தான் இராஜ்யத்தைக் கைப்பற்ற எண்ணங்கொண்டு சூழ்ச்சி செய்துகொண்டிருந்தான். படைவீரரும் ஒற்றுமையின்றி இருந்தனர். ஆகையால் இப்போது அக்பரை எதிர்ப்பது கஷ்டமெனவும் அதனால் அவரோடு சமாதானமாகப் போவது சரியெனவும் அரசியார் கூறினார். சிலருக்கு அது பிடிக்கவில்லை. மகமத்கானுடன் சேர்ந்துகொண்டு அரசியைக்கொல்ல யோசனை புரிந்தனர். அவ்வாறே அரசி ஹமித்கான் என்பவனால் கொல்லப்பட்டாள். அரசியாக பிறந்து வீரதீரனுமாய் விளங்கி தன் தாய்நாட்டுக்காக உழைத்து போர்க்கோலம் பூண்டு பணியாற்றி உத்தம நங்கையாய் விளங்கி உயிரையும் கொடுத்தாள்.

ஜப்பான் பெண்கள் தீவிர முன்னேற்றம்

ஜப்பான் தேசத்துப் பெண்கள் உயர்வான சிருஷ்டியே யாவார்கள். பிறப்பிலேயே சிக்கலானவும் கரடுமுரடானவுமான விஷயங்களை எளிதாக முடிக்கும் தன்மையர். மற்ற ஐரோப்பிய அமெரிக்கா நாடுகளில் உள்ள வனிதைகளைவிட ஜப்பான் மாதர்கள் நமது அனுதாபத்திற்குப் பாத்திரமானவர்களாவர். ஏனெனில் நீண்டகாலமாக முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு வந்திருப்பது போற்றத்தகுந்தது.

ஜப்பான் பெண்கள் முன்காலத்தில் ஆண்களுக்குச் சமமான உரிமையும், இதற்குமேற்பட்ட தன்மையும் கொண்டவர்களாய் விளங்கினார்கள். இவ்வுலகைப் படைத்த சூரிய தேவியன் அருளால் வந்தவர்கள் என்பதே இவர்களின் கருத்து. ஜப்பான் பெண்கள் சமூகத்துறைகளிலும் சரிசமத்துவநிலையை அடைந்தனர். பௌத்தமதம் ஜப்பானுக்குள் வியாபித்தபொழுதுதான் ஜப்பான் வனிதையர்கள் சமூகத்துறையில் தாழ்வானார்கள்.

துரதிர்ஷ்டத்தின் காரணமாக அடிப்படையில் கிடக்கும்படி ஜப்பான் சட்டதிட்டத்தால் ஒடுக்கப்பட்டு ஜப்பான் பெண்கள் குடும்பப்பொறுப்பைக் கவனிக்கும்படி ஆனதால் அவர்கள் பதவியின் உயர்வைக் கெடுத்தது. "டோக்கு காவா" காலத்தில் பெண்களின் நிலை இன்னும் பாதிக்கப்பட்டு அடிமையேபோல் அவர்கள் கிடந்து குடும்பபாரம் சுமக்கும் வண்டியாகக் கிடக்கச்செய்தனர்.

துரதிர்ஷ்டப் பெண்கள்

'டோக்கு காவா' காலத்திற்குப் பிறகு "மான்சைமான் சிக்காமாஸ்த்து" என்ற ஆசிரியர் ஜப்பானை ஆட்டிவைக்கும் பெரிய மாறுதல் சக்கரமாய் வந்தார். அவர் காலத்தில் பெண்கள் தாயின் தன்மைக்கும், காதலுக்கும், மணத்திற்கும் மாத்திரமே உள்ள தன்மையில் அவர்களை இருக்கவைத்து மனத்துயரோடு கிடக்கும்படி நேர்ந்தது.

இதற்குப் பிறகு க்யோகலாசாலை ஸ்தாபகர் "யுக்கிச்சிபுக்குசாவா" என்பவராலும், மற்றுமுள்ள அநேகர்களாலும், பெண்களாலும், இந்தப் பரிதாப நிலையைப்பற்றி யோசிக்கப்பட்டது. இதோடுகூட முதலாளித்வம் என்ற தன்மையும் சேர்ந்து அதோடு இந்தப் பெண்களின் தாழ்வும், ஒழியபாடுபட அரும்பாடுபட்டும் ஒன்றும் முடியாது கடைசியில் இப்பொழுதுதான் அப்பெண்கள் சுதந்தரமடைய முடிந்தது.

பல முயற்சிகள்

இப்படியாக ஜப்பான் வனிதையர்கள் தாங்கள் தங்களுக்கு முன்னிருக்கும் பல கஷ்டங்களைத் தாண்டி தாங்கள் சுதந்தரத்துடன் கல்வி பயிலவும், மற்ற உரிமைகளை அனுபவிக்கவும், இதேபோல் வைதிக வாழ்க்கையான காதல், மணம், விவாக தீக்கம், மற்றுமுள்ள பெண்கள் வேலை முதலியவைகளையும் கவனிக்கலானார்கள்.

ஆரம்பகாலத்தில் ஜப்பான் தேசப் பெண்கள் ராஜீயக்கூட்டங்கள் போடுவதும் ஒன்று சேர்வதுமாகவே இருந்தார்கள். இந்நாட்டில் நிலவியிருந்த சமாதானமானது இம்மாதிரி இப்பெண்கள் ராஜீயக்கூட்டங்கள் போடுவதைக் கூட்ட முடியாதபடி தடுத்தது. இதனால் அவர்கள் சுயஸ்தாபனங்களுக்குக்கூட தாங்கள் ஒருவரை நியமிக்கவோ அல்லது நியமித்து வாக்களிக்கவோ இயலாதுபோயிற்று.

பலவிதமர்க முயன்றும் ஆதரவு கிடைக்கவில்லை. 1932-ல் ஏற்பட்ட பூகம்பமானது ஜப்பான் பெண்கள் முன்னேற்றத்திற்குப் பெரிய மாறுதலை ஏற்படுத்தியது. இந்தப் பூகம்பம் ஏற்பட்டதால் பெண்கள் அதன் நிவாரணத்திற்காக வேலை செய்ததில் அவர்களது முயற்சிப் பெரிதும் பயனளித்தது. சட்டசபையின் சட்டமும் இவர்கள் ராஜீயக்கூட்டங்கள் நிறுவ சம்மதித்தது.

இம்மாதிரி இவர்கள் முயற்சி பயன்பெறும் சமயத்தில் சுய ஸ்தல ஸ்தாபன உரிமையின் பங்கை 1931-ம் வருட காபினட் சபை உயர்ந்த சபைகளில் அதிகாரத்தை மறுத்ததாலும், கீழ்ச்சபைகளில் உறுதி அளித்து காலத்தை மாத்திரம் நிர்ணயிக்காதிருந்தது.

இக்கஷ்டத்தை ஒழிக்கவேண்டி பல பெண்கள் உணர்ச்சி பெருகினவர்களாய் அங்கங்கே அனேக ஸ்தாபனங்களை ஏற்படுத்தி வேலை செய்தனர். இப்படித் திறமையாகவும் அழகாகவும் முன்னணியில் நின்று வேலை செய்ததில் முக்கியமானது 1924-ம் வருடத்தில் "பூயசன் காக்டோ கோடோமியி." என்ற சபை ஆகும். "ஒச்சிமிகுயூ பூஷ்ரீயோ" என்ற கிறிஸ்தவ அம்மை இதன் தலைவராய் நின்று ஒப்விலா வேலைசெய்தார். பிறகு மிஸ் பூயூசிஇச்சிகா என்பவர் இச்சபைக்கு தலைவரானார்.

கல்வியில் பெண்களுக்கு ஆண்களை ஒப்ப உரிமை அளிக்கப்பட்டது. ஆரம்ப மத்தியக் கல்வியில் பெண்கள் ஆண்களைவிடச் சிறந்திருந்தும் உயர்தரக் கல்வியில் அவர்கள் மிகமிகக் குறைவாகவேயிருந்தனர்.

ஆரம்பக்கல்வியில் பெண்கள் ஆண்களைவிட ஒப்பப்படித்தனர். 1932-ல் ஆண்கள் 5,392,259ம் பெண்கள் 4,969,63 மாகவிருந்து கல்விபயின்றனர். செகண்டரி பள்ளிக்கூடங்கள் 1932-ல் 980 வரை பெண்களுக்காக ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டன. மத்தியதரப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்கள் 558. இவைகளில் 362,621ம் 3,361, 86மாக மாணவிகள் கல்விகற்றனர். பள்ளிக்கூடங்களையும் பிள்ளைகளையும் பார்க்கும்பொழுது பெண்களுக்கு ஆண்களைவிட அதிக வசதிகள் அளிக்கப்பட்டிருந்தன.

கலாசாலைப் படிப்புவிஷயத்தில் ஆண்களுக்காக 160ம் பெண்களுக்காக 44ம் ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டன. சமூகத்தேவையில் வேண்டியவைகளை அளிப்பதற்கும் அவைகளை முன்னணியில் கொண்டுவருவதற்கும் கல்வி அவசியமாதலின் அவர்களை அப்படிக் கொண்டுவரவும் பெண்கள் சரி சுதந்தரம் பெறவும் கல்வி மந்திரியும் பரம்பரைத் தத்துவமாய் மாதர்கள் "சிறந்த மனைவியராய் அறிவுள்ள தாயாராய்" விளங்கவுள்ள தன்மையை அளிக்கவும், அதனை இப்பொழுது ஜப்பான் பெண்கள் அடைந்து வருகிறார்கள். ஆண்களுக்கு நேர்மையாய் அவர்களுக்குச் சரிசமத்துவ நிலைமை பெற அவர்கள் இன்னும் போதுமானபடி பாடுபட வேண்டும்.

நமது உலகம்

கிறிஸ்தவ மாடக்கன்னிகைகளாக ஆவதற்கு மங்களூரிலிருந்து ரோம் நகரத்திற்குப் பம்பாயில் சென்றவாரம் பதினொரு பெண்கள் கப்பலேறினார்கள்.

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மத்திய மாகாணம் ஆர்க்காடு தாலுகா மூண்டகயான் கிராமத்தில் வசிக்கும் புண்டிலீகர், அவருடைய பிள்ளை டவுலத்து ஆகியவர்கள்மீது டவுலத்தின் மாமனாகிய நாராயணன் என்றவர் ஒரு கிரிமினல் வழக்குத் தொடுத்ததில் புண்டிலீகரும் டவுலத்தும் அபராதம் விதிக்கப்பட்டார்கள். இதன்மேல் தகப்பனும் பிள்ளையும் ஆத்திரங்கொண்டு நாராயணனைப் பழிவாங்கும்பொருட்டு அவருடைய பெண்ணும் டவுலத்தின் மனைவியுமான 'கலாவதி' என்ற பெண்ணை இழுத்து வந்து வயலில் உழுதுகொண்டிருந்த ஓர் உழுவுமாட்டை அவிழ்த்துவிட்டு அம்மாட்டுக்குப் பதிலாக அந்தப் பெண்ணைக் கயிறுகொண்டு ஏரில்பூட்டி, வயலிலிருந்து அதே கோலத்துடன் கடைத்தெருவைச் சுற்றி, அழைத்துவந்தனர். ஆர்க்காடு ௨-வது வகுப்பு மாஜிஸ்டிரேட் கோர்ட்டில் தகப்பனும் பிள்ளையும் குற்றஞ்சாட்டப்பட்டு எதிரிகளுக்குத் தலா 4 மாதம் கடுங்காவலும் 150 ரூபாய் அபராதமும் விதிக்கப்பட்டது.

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சையதுபுரம் என்ற கிராமத்தில் ஒரு முஸ்லீம் மாதுக்குப் பிறந்த ஆண் குழந்தைக்கு ஒரு கையும் ஒரு காலும், இரண்டு தலைகளும் இருக்கின்றன. திரளான ஜனங்கள் குழந்தையை வந்து பார்த்துப்போகிறார்களாம்.

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மிஸ் எஸ். ஆர். ஐயர் இங்கிலாந்தில் மேற்படிப்பு பெறப் போகிறார்கள்.

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இங்கிலாந்தில் மிஸ் குதன்பார்க்கு என்ற ஸ்திரீ தமது தோட்டத்தில் செடிகளை வளர்த்து ஒரு நாயும் ஒரு பூனையும் சண்டைக்குத் தயாராக நிற்பதுபோல் அவற்றைக் கத்தரிவிட்டிருக்கும் காட்சி வியக்கத்தக்கதாகும்.

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இப்போது பலவித மிருகங்களுக்குள்ளும் பந்தயம் நடத்துவது வழக்கமாகிவிட்டது. அமெரிக்காவில் வெள்ளாடுகளைத் தனி ரேக்ளாவண்டிகளில் பூட்டிப் பெண்கள் பந்தயம் ஓட்டுகிறார்களாம்.

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மேல் நாடுகளில் இப்போது ஸ்திரீகள் எல்லாவித வேலைகளுக்கும் வந்துவிட்டனர். அமெரிக்காவில் வாஷிங்டன் நகரத்தைச்சேர்ந்த மிஸ் 'பீபேலே, கொத்துவேலை செய்து சுவர் எடுப்பதில் தேர்ச்சி வாய்ந்திருக்கிறாளாம்.

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அமெரிக்காவில் நியூஜெர்ஸி என்றவிடத்தில் தச்சுவேலை செய்யும் மிஸ் இரீன் ராட்னி என்ற 22 வயதுப்பெண் ஒருத்தி இருக்கிறாளாம். அவள் தகப்பனுக்கும் தச்சுவேலைதானாம்.

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ஜப்பானில் பெண்களும் பலசாலிகளாக விருக்கவேண்டுமென்று பலவித தேகப்பயிற்சிப் போட்டிகள் நடத்தப்படுகின்றன.

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டோக்கியோ நகரக்குளத்தில் இரு பெண்கள் நீந்துவதற்குப் பழகிவருகிறார்களாம்.

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வயலெட், டெய்ஸி என்ற இருபெண்களுக்கு பிறவியிலேயே முதுகெலும்புகள் ஒன்றாக சேர்ந்திருக்கின்றனவாம். இவர்கள் ஒருவரைக் கல்யாணம் செய்துகொள்ள விரும்பியும் கோர்ட்டு லைசென்ஸ் கொடுக்க மறுத்துவிட்டதால் அப்பீல் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

ஸ்திரீகளின் அறியாமை

16வயது வரை விவாகம் வேண்டாம்

டாக்டர் முத்துலக்ஷ்மி ரெட்டி பிரசங்கம்

திருப்பதியில் நடைபெற்ற தேசிய சுகாதார சிசுக்கள் வாரக் கொண்டாட்டத்தில் நடைபெற்ற நகரசபை சுகாதாரப் பொருட்காட்சியைத் திறந்துவைத்த பொழுது டாக்டர் முத்துலக்ஷ்மி ரெட்டி ஒரு சிறந்த பிரசங்கம் செய்தார். திருப்பதி தேவஸ்தானம் பேஷ்காரரான திரு. அன்னாராவ் தலைமை வகித்தார்.

டாக்டர் முத்துலக்ஷ்மி ரெட்டி

டாக்டர் முத்துலக்ஷ்மி ரெட்டி செய்த பிரசங்கம் பின்வருமாறு :—

"விவாகம் ஒன்றுதான் நமது வாழ்க்கையின் நோக்கமென்று நீங்கள் நினைக்கவேண்டாம். விவாகத்தைப்போல் கல்வியும் முக்கியமானதாக இருக்கின்றது. பால்ய விவாகமே பிரசவகால மரணத்துக்கும் சிசு மரணத்துக்கும் காரணமாக இருக்கின்றது. சிறு வயதில் விவாகம் செய்யப்பட்டும், தக்க பருவமடைவதற்கு முன்னமேயே தாயாக ஏற்பட்டும் வருகின்ற பெண்களிடை க்ஷயரோகம் சர்வ சாதாரணமாகக் காணப்படுகின்றது.

வியாதிகளை எவ்வாறு தடுக்க முடியுமென்பதையும், குழந்தைகளை எவ்வாறு வளர்க்கவேண்டுமென்பதையும் ஒவ்வொருவரும் உணரவேண்டும். தாய்களையும் குழந்தைகளையும் பாதுகாக்க ஸ்தல ஸ்தாபனங்களும், நகர சபைகளும் அநுஷ்டிக்கும்பொருட்டு சர்க்கார் சில சட்டங்கள் நிறைவேற்றி இருக்கின்றனர்.

பிரசவ குழந்தை நலச்சட்டம் 1918-ம் வருடத்தில் நிறைவேற்றப்பட்டது. அதன்படி ஒவ்வொரு ஸ்தல ஸ்தாபனமும் பிரசவ, சிசுநல விடுதிகள் ஏற்படுத்த வேண்டும். மருத்துவச்சிகள் சட்டம் 1906-ம் வருடம் நிறைவேற்றப்பட்டது. அதன்படி பிரசவகாலத்தில் தாய்களுக்கு சிகிச்சைசெய்ய பல சிறந்த மருத்துவச்சிகளுக்கு பயிற்சி அளிக்கப்படுகின்றது.

நமது தேசத்தில் ஸ்திரீகளிடை அறியாமை பரவி இருக்கின்றது. பிரசவ காலத்தில் சிறந்த முறையில் வைத்திய உதவி செய்ய 100-க்கு 3 பேருக்குக் கூடத்தெரியாது. அதற்குக் காரணம் அறியாமையே.

பிரசவ காலத்தில் வெகு சில தாய்களே ஆஸ்பத்திரிகளுக்குச் செல்லுகின்றனர். பொதுவாக நாவித வகுப்பைச் சேர்ந்த மருத்துவச்சிகளே வைத்தியஞ் செய்கின்றனர். நாவித வகுப்பைச் சேர்ந்தவர்கள் வைத்தியம் செய்வது நமது நாட்டில் ஏற்படும் ஏராளமான மரணங்களுக்குக் காரணமாக இருக்கின்றது. கூடியமட்டும் தாய்கள் பிரசவகாலத்தில் ஆஸ்பத்திரிக்குச் செல்லவேண்டும்.

பிச்சைக்காரர்கள் பிரச்னை மிகவும் முக்கியமானதாகிவிட்டது. அவர்களில் பெரும்பாலோருக்கு குஷ்டரோகம் இருக்கின்றது. மற்றவர்கள் குருடர்களாகவும் நொண்டிகளாகவும் இருக்கின்றனர். அவர்களுக்கு பொது ஜனங்கள் நிவாரணமளிக்கவேண்டும்.

முடிவாக நான் உங்களைக் கேட்டுக்கொள்ளுவது என்னவென்றால் உங்களுடைய புத்திரிகளின் கல்வியை முக்கியமாகக் கவனிக்கவேண்டும். குறைந்தது 16வயது வரையாவது அவர்களுக்கு விவாகம் செய்யக்கூடாது."

TELUGU

శ్రీ వాణ్యష్టకము.

క॥ వాణీ! పుస్తకపాణీ!
వీణావాదనకలాప్రవీణా! పులిన
శ్రోణీ! జితమదబంబర
వేణీ! కలవాణి! కావవే మము వాణీ ॥౧॥

క॥ తల్లీ! మృదుకోమలతను
వల్లీ! రామామతల్లి! పల్లవపాణీ!
ముల్లోకములకుఁ దల్లీ!
తల్లీ! మముఁ బ్రోవుమమ్మ దయతో వాణీ ॥౨॥

క॥ ధవళమనోహర రూపము
ధవళాంశుకయుగము తంపీనధవళాసనము౯
ధవళకమలాక్షమాలయు
సువిమలదరహాస మెలయఁ జూడఁగ వాణీ ॥౩॥

క॥ నివసింపవె మావాక్కున
నవనవవాగమృతధార నవ్యప్రతిభో
ద్భవవాగ్ధాటీపటిమం
బు వెడలఁగ జిహ్వ నిల్చి ప్రోవవె వాణీ ॥౪॥

క॥ నిను మెప్పింప భవామర
సనకాదులకైనఁ దరమె జగతీవనంగా
నే నెంత చిన్నగా మది
దీనావన! దేవి! నీవ దిక్కవు వాణీ ॥౫॥

క॥ పల్లవలలితాంగుళిచ
యుల్లసమున వీణమీటు చొయ్యారముతోఁ
జల్లని నీదు కటాక్షము
జల్లవె మాపయిని సతము సదయాత్మ వాణీ ॥౬॥

క॥ తల్లీ! నీదు దయామయ
హృల్లీలావీక్షణమున నేగదకవిత
యుల్లాసిల్లి వీడి వాగ్వశ
ముల్లసమున బడసి యశమునొందుట వాణీ ॥౭॥

క॥ శారద! భక్తత్రాణవి
శారద! శరదిందువదన! సారసనయనా!

మారసన నిల్చి బల్కుసె
నీరజముఖి! యశము లీవె నిరతము వాణీ ॥౭॥

క॥ మంగళము భారతీజయ
మంగళమజు రాణి! దివ్య మంగళ కలితా!
మంగళమాగమసన్నుత
మంగళమాదిత్యవిజిత మణిమయ మకుటా ॥౮॥

కమల.

(గత సంచిక శేషము.)

కొంతసేపటికి ఒక సేవకుడొక యుత్తరము మాతని కందించెను. అతడు దాని విప్పిచూచెను. దానిలో 5 పదిరూపాయల నోటులున్నవి. ఒక చిన్న చీటీయున్నది. అందులో ప్రియమైన మోహన రావునకు:—"మీ దాసురాలు పంపిన కానుకను దయచేసి పరిగ్రహింపుడు. నిగ్రహించవలదు. నీ దేహారోగ్యమునుగురించి తెలియజేయుడు. ఇట్లు కమల" అని యున్నది.

మఱికొంతసేపటికి డాక్టరు లోన ప్రవేశించెను. మోహనరావెవరని యడుగగా నాతడు తానేయని జెప్పెను. ఆతడంత మోహనుని పరీక్షించి చూచి మందిచ్చి వెడలిపోయెను.

నారాయణమూర్తిగారు తన భార్యతోగలసి యంతయు సూచించెను. తాను చెప్పిన మాటలన్నియు నామెకు నచ్చినవిగాని తన కూతున కేమి యిష్టమో కనుగొనక నేదియు జేయరాదని యామె పలికెను. ప్రసాదు తన కూతును వివాహమాడుట కంగీకరించెను. ముందు నారాయణమూర్తి గారికీ విషయము ప్రస్తావించుటకు కొంచెము జంకుగానుండెను. గాని సంఘ సంస్కరణ విషయముల బ్రోత్సహించుచు నాతని మనస్సు మెల్లగా కనుగొనెను. గొప్ప కుటుంబపు పిల్లవాడు, ధనవంతుడు, విద్యావంతుడు నగుటచే కమలను వానికిచ్చి పునర్వివాహము చేయ నాతడు సమకట్టెను. సుగుణవతి మాత్రము పిల్ల సమ్మతిలేక చేయకూడదనెను. కమల కుత్తరము వ్రాసియున్నట్లాయన జెప్పెను. ఇంతలో తపాలావాడొక యుత్తరము తెచ్చిచ్చెను. అది కమల దగ్గరనుండి. ఆతడిట్లు చదివెను. 'తండ్రీ' మీ యుత్తరములోని సంగతులు గ్రహించితిని. స్త్రీలు పునర్వివాహమాడుట శాస్త్రసమ్మతమేయైనను పాతివ్రత్యమునకును భంగము రాగూడదు. ధనాశకుపాలై తన మనస్సును చెడుపుకొనరాదు. తాము నాకై చాల కష్టములను బడి నాకువిద్య గఱపితిరి. దానికి ఫలితము నాకు యుక్తాయుక్త వివేచనాజ్ఞానము గలుగుట ముఖ్యము. కావున జెప్పెదను—ప్రసాదరావునందు నాకు ప్రథమమునుండియు సోదర భావమే. వానిని వివాహమాడుటకు నా మనస్సంగీకరించుటలేదు. నేను వివాహమాడుట నా తల్లికిని ప్రీతికరమని వ్రాసితిరి. అట్లయిన మోహనరావు మీ యల్లుడెందుకు కాగూడదు. నాకు వివాహముపై భ్రాంతిలేదు. యౌవనము కారణముగ నెంచి సంశయింపవలదు. ప్రసాదరావుమాట తలపెట్టవలదు. మన్నింపుడు.

ఇట్లు, కమల.

ఈ యుత్తరము జదువగనే సుగుణవతి, చూచితిరా, అమ్మాయి సమ్మతిలేక మన మేమియు జేయకూడదన్నాను గదా! మన మామె సుఖము గోరుచుండినది యామెకు సంతోషదాయకముగ నుండవలెను అనెను. నారాయణమూర్తి యేమియు మాటలాడక నాలోచించుచుండెను. [illegible]కు సరే అట్లేయగుగాక యని చెప్పి తన గదికి వెళ్లెను. సాయంత్రం 5 ఘంట లయ్యెను. శాస్త్రులవారు సంధ్యావార్చి యరుగుపై నాసీనులైరి యవధానులుగారు వచ్చిరి.

శా:—అవధానులుగారూ దయచేయండి.

అ:—శాస్త్రులుగారూ! మీరన్నంత అయింది.

శా:—ఏమది.

అ:—నారాయణమూర్తి కూతునకు రెండవ పెండ్లి.

నిన్న మదరాసులో రిజిస్ట్రరు మారేజి జరిగిందట. పెద్ద పెద్ద యుద్యోగస్థులందరు వచ్చిరట. నారాయణమూర్తిని చాలా మెచ్చుకొన్నారట కూడాను.

శా:—కలికాల మహిమ. ఎవరికిచ్చాడండీ వెదవనుండ నెవరు కట్టుకొంటారు.

అ:—మోహనరావునకు; ముందు తహసీల్దారువారబ్బాయి ప్రసాదున కిచ్చునట్లిక్కడ వదంతియుండెనుగాని, పిల్లకు నచ్చలేదట. తుదకామె యిష్టప్రకారం మోహనుని కిచ్చిరట; ఇక వారం రోజులలో నందరిక్కడికే వస్తారట. ఇక్కడ యూరివారి కందరికి గొప్పవిందు చేస్తారట.

శా:—ఏడిచినట్లేయున్నది వాని పెండ్లి. కులమునకు వాడు కోతిలాగ వచ్చాడు. మనకెందుకు మానండి, పాపపువార్త.

చిత్రలేఖ.

చతుష్షష్టి కళలకును జన్మస్థానము భరతఖండము. అందు చిత్రకళ నెఱుంగనివారు ప్రాచీన భరతఖండమున నెవ్వరును లేరు. చిత్రలేఖనము సకల కళలలోను పూర్వమున మిక్కిలి ప్రాముఖ్యత గాంచియుండెను. చాలాకాలముగా నామశేషమైయుండిన చిత్రలేఖనమునకిప్పుడు కొంత యుద్బోధము కలుగుచున్నది. చిత్రకారుల కొకింత గౌరవాదరము లెల్లెడల గాన్పించుచున్నది. గాని యీ కళ ప్రాచీనకాలమున స్త్రీ పురుషులకు సర్వసాధారణమైయుండెను. వారికి చిత్రకళా కౌశలమున నెట్టి పాటవముండెననగా, నొక్కమారు తాము చూచిన రూపము నట్లే యూవంతయును భేదములేక చిత్రింపగలరు. మనోదర్పణమున గోచరించిన ప్రియజన విగ్రహము నిజస్వరూపమున గనుగొనుట దుర్లభమైనను స్వచిత్రకళాకౌశల ప్రభావమున నది నుగోచరమే. అంతేగాదు తాము నెప్పుడు కని యెఱుంగని వ్యక్తి నిగూఢా నితరుల వర్ణనాక్రమమును బట్టి నిజస్వరూపములవలె జీవకళలుట్టిపడ నిర్మింపగలరు. కవియొక్కయు చిత్రకారునియొక్కయు భావనా విశేషము లనన్యజన సామాన్యములు. కవి తన భావనలచే రసజ్ఞుల మనములకు నవనవోత్కర్షముల గలిగించును. చిత్రకారుడు తన శక్తిచే మనస్సులకేగాక నేత్రములకును నానంద ముత్పాదించును. మహాకవి కల్పనలు విద్వజ్జనైకగ్రాహ్యమైయుండును. చిత్రకారుని హస్తకౌశలము పండితపామరచక్షురుత్సవదాయియగును. ఇట్టి చిత్రకళ మన దేశమునకు క్రొత్తగాదు, భరతఖండమున చిత్రకళాకాంతిరశ్ములు చొరని మూలయేలేదు. దాని నామోదింపని సహృదయులు లేరు. ఆదరింపని నరనాథు లరిది. స్త్రీలలోను మహాకుశలురగు చిత్రకారిణు లుండిరి.

పూర్వము శ్రీరాముడు సీతాలక్ష్మణులతో గూడి పితృవాక్య పరిపాలనార్థము, దుష్టశిక్షణ శిష్టపరిపాలనాచరణదక్షుండై, పదునాలుగేడులు వనవాసము జేసి, రావణ వధానంతర మయోధ్య జేరి రాజ్యభారము వహించెను. రామరాజ్యకాలమున ప్రజలు తమ కన్నతండ్రులనుసహా మరచి రామునే తండ్రిగ భావించియుండిరి. ఈతిబాధలు లేక భూమి యెల్ల సస్యముల సమృద్ధిగ నిచ్చుచుండెను. ప్రజలు వర్ణాశ్రమముల దప్పకుండిరి. దేశమున నరిష్టమనునది లేకుండెను. అంత సీత గర్భము దాల్చెను. అప్పుడామె కొక దోహదము జనించెను. అదేమన ముందు తాను వనవాసము జేసిన కాలమున జూచిన యరణ్యములు, తపోవనములు, నదీనదములు, తరులతాకుంజ సౌందర్యములు, యూశ్రమములు, గోదావరీ సైకతవేదికలు, వీనిని మరల జూడవలయునని యందు నాడుకొనవలయునని, తన మనోగతమును శ్రీరామున కెఱింగింపగా నాతడు నామె యభీష్టము దీర్పగోరెను. కాని దీర్చుటెట్లు? తాము 14 వర్ష కాలమున జూచిన తావులు, విహరించిన స్థలము లనేకములు గలవు. వానిని మరల జూచుట కనేక దినములు పట్టును. స్థలములు నుగమ్యములుగావు. పూర్ణగర్భిణియగు సీత నా ప్రదేశములకు దీసికొని

పోవుట కిది యుక్తసమయము గాదు. ఎట్లయిన నామె దోహదము దీర్చవలెనని గురువుల యాజ్ఞ. ఈ సంగతి లక్ష్మణున కెఱుక పరచెను. అన్నమాట జవదాటని తమ్ముడు యాజ్ఞను శిరసావహించి యంతయు చిత్రమున సిద్ధపరచి యన్నకెఱింగించెను. సీతారాములు వీక్షింపజనిరి. ఆహా! యేమి ఆ చిత్రకళా కౌశలము! చిత్రకారుని నేర్పు! సీతా వివాహ సందర్భము మొదలుకొని శ్రీరామ పట్టాభిషేకమువఱకు నుగల విశేషముల కనుల కింపు గొలుపునట్లు మనస్సున కానందముగలుగునట్లు ప్రత్యక్షముగ నునట్లు చిత్రించెను. రామాదుల వివాహమైన నాతడు జూచియుండును, వారు విహరించిన యరణ్య ప్రదేశముల, విశ్రమించిన యాశ్రమ స్థలముల, సేవించిన మహర్షి సంఘముల, మఱియు నింకనుగల విశేషముల యాతడు కనియుండునా? వాని కరకౌశలము జూడ జూడ సీత మనస్సున తాను జూచునది చిత్రమను తలంపే లేక నిశ్చయముగ తాను వనమున నున్నట్లే యనుకొనసాగెను. మారీచుని గన్నదే యామెకు గలిగినభీతియు, రావణుని గాంచగనే యామె మూర్ఛబోవుటయు మునికాంతలగాంచి వారితో విహరింపగోరుటయు భాగీరథి జలముల నవగాహనము సేయదలచుటయు నివన్ని యామెకు తన్నెఱుంగకయే కలిగినవి. ఇది మతి భ్రమింజేయు చిత్రకారుని నేర్పరితనము గాక వేఱేమి? రాముడు దరిగాంచి సీత కది చిత్రమే గాని నిక్కముగాదని తెలుపువఱకు నామెకు తానయోధ్యలోనుండు జ్ఞాపకమే లేదు.

(3) దుష్యంతుడు శకుంతలను నిరాకరించి మరల యభిజ్ఞాన దర్శనమున నామె జ్ఞప్తికి రాగా నాతని కామె చిత్తరువేగదా యెంతయో శాంతిగూర్చ గలదయ్యె. అదియు స్వహస్త లిఖితముగుడు మఱెంత మనస్సునకూఱట కలిగెను. మఱియు, మాలవికను ప్రేమించిన అగ్నిమిత్రుడామె రూపును చిత్రఫలకముపై లిఖించి వినోదించెను.

ద్వాపరయుగమున మహాబలియను నరుడొకడుండెను. అతనికి నూర్గురు పుత్రులుండిరి. వారిలో జ్యేష్ఠుడు బాణాసురుడు. వాడు వేయి వత్సరములు పరమశివునిగూర్చి తపంబొనర్చి ప్రమథనాథుని గణపతిముగ తన పురమున గావలుండునట్లు వరంబువడసెను. దాన నాతడన్యులకజేయుడై గర్వించి యొకపరి, మహేశునితో, స్వామీ నన్ను గెలువ గాగలదండిమగ లీలోకమున లేరు. నీకు దక్క నే నితరులకజేయుడనని ప్రమత్త వాక్యములాడ, భూతనాథుడుగ్రకోపముగొని, ఎవ్వని ప్రవేశముచే నీ పుర ద్వారమండలి గోపుర ధ్వజము తనంత విరుగ వ్రాలునో నట్టివానిచే నీవు మడిసెదవని శపించెను.

ఆ బాణాసురునికి యుష యను కన్యకామణిగలదు. ఆమె రూపలావణ్యగుణవిశేషాలంకృత. ఒక నాడాయువతీలలామ యంతఃపురమున హంసతూలికా తల్పమున శయనించి నిద్రించుతఱి స్వప్నమున శ్రీకృష్ణ పౌత్రుడగు అనిరుద్ధునిగలిసి వానితో విహరించినట్లు కలగని మేల్కాంచెను. రూపజితమన్మథుండగు నమ్మహాపురుషు డెవ్వడైయుండనోపునని దలచి వానియందు బద్ధానురాగయై నిద్రాహారముల పరిత్యజించి, చింతాక్రాంత యయ్యెను. ఆమెకొక యనుంగు నెచ్చెలిగలదు. ఆమెను చిత్రలేఖయనియు జిత్రరేఖయనియుం జెప్పుదురు. తన నామమును సార్థకము జేయుటకోయనునట్లామె చిత్రలేఖనమున కడుంగడు దిట్ట. తానెన్నడు గని యెఱుంగని వ్యక్తినైన నితరులనోటనుండ విని యచ్చముగ జిత్రింపగలదు. ఒకా భూపాలనాధుని కొమరితె యయ్యును, సంసార బంధముల ద్రోసి, నిశ్చల మనస్కయై యోగినీవృత్తి నవలంభించెను. నారద మహర్షికి శిష్యురాలై, రాజ్యాంగ రహస్యముల, యుద్ధ పద్ధతుల సమగ్రముగ నభ్యసించెను. చిత్రకలయందేగాక తనకున్నంగల సకల కలలందును ప్రవీణయై యుండెను.

తన నెచ్చెలి చింతాక్రాంతయై కృశించియుండుట కేమి కారణమని నారయగోరి చిత్రలేఖ, యామెతో చెలీ! కొన్నాళ్లనుండి నీతీరు వేరైయున్నది. చెలులతో బలుకవు. ఆటలందనియవు. నిద్రాహారములం దలక్ష్యముగ నుంటివి? దీనికేమి కారణమని యడిగెను. ఉషయు కన్యకాజన సామాన్య లజ్జాలంకృతయై మిన్నకుండెను. తరువరి చిత్రలేఖ తన మృదు మధురవాక్యములచే నామె నూరడించి మనోగత మెయ్యదియని యడుగ నామె, "సఖీ! నీకంటె నాయనుంగు చెలులు నాకింకొకరుం డుండేరు. నీవును నేనును

తనువుల వేఱుగ నుండియును మనముల నొక్కటిగ నుండుము. నా తండ్రియును నిన్ను తన కొమరితవలెనే భావించును. నీవన్ననో సకలశాస్త్ర పారంగతవు. నా మనోగత మతిరహస్యము. దుర్ఘటము. దీని నీకు దక్క నన్యులకు దెలుప నేసాహసింపను. దానిం దెల్పెద వినుము. ఒక్క నాటి రేయి నేను స్వప్నమునందు నొక మహాపురుషుని గాంచితిని. అతఁడు పసిఁడికాంతిని దెగడు దేహచ్ఛాయగలవాఁడు. సరోజదళముల నేవగించు కనుగవగలవాఁడు; వాని దీర్ఘబాహాలతయుగము వానుకిని ధిక్కరింపజాలినవి. పీతవస్త్రధారి. మానినీ మనోరంజకుఁడు. అట్టి దివ్యపురుషుఁ డొక్కరుఁడు నాకు గానఁబడి నాతో విహరించినట్లు కలగంటిని. నిద్రమేల్కొని యిది నిజమైయుండునో యని పలుదెసల పరికించితిగాని తుదకది కలగా నెఱిఁగితిని. అదిమొదలు ఆతని నిర్మలరూపము నాకంటికి గట్టినట్లగపడుచున్నది. ఎంత ప్రయత్నించినను మఱపునకు రాకున్నది. ఇదియే నా మనోగతము. నా కాతని జూచుభాగ్యము నీచే లభింపవలెనుగాని యితరులచే శక్యము గాదు. లేనినాఁడీ తనువులపై యాసలేదనెను. ఆమాటల నాలకించి చిత్రలేఖ, 'దానవరాజ నందనా! నీమాటలు వింతలు. కలలోఁగన్నది నిక్కమగునే, నీవు కలలో గన్నవాని నెవరెవ్వరని నిర్ణయింపగలరే! భళీ, నీకేల యీలీలమతి భ్రమణము గలిగె. పుడమిని రాజన్యతనయులు లేరే! వారిలో నొక్కని వరింపరాదే, సర్వ దిక్పాలకుల సంగ్రామదక్షసమర్థుండగు నీ తండ్రి నీకట్టి వరుసైన సంపాదింప గలుగును. కావున నా పలుకు లాలించి యీ పిచ్చితలంపు మానుము' అనెను. ఉష యెంతజెప్పినను వినక దినదినము చింతాక్రాంతయగుచుండె. ఇట్లుండుటంజూచి చిత్రలేఖ యొకనాఁ డామెతో 'చెలీ! నీవైఖరిగాంచిన నాకేమియును దోచకున్నది. నీసంగతి నీ తలిదండ్రులకెఱింగించుటకును సమ్మతింపవు. ఏమిచేయవచ్చును. నాకొక యుపాయము దోచుచున్నది. ఈ భూమింగల రాజులను, రాజనందనుల నెల్లర నే చిత్రమున వ్రాసిచూపెద. నీ మనోహరు డెవ్వారిలో నెవ్వఁడైయుండునో దెలుపుము' అన నామెయు దానికొడంబడెను.

అంతట చిత్రలేఖనావిశారదయగు చిత్రలేఖ, తన నేర్పు మించగా అంగ వంగ కళింగ కాంభోజాంధ్రక విదేహ పాంచాలాద్యనేక భూమిపతుల నెల్ల చిత్రగతులుగ జేసి యుష ముందట నిలిపెను. అహో! ఆమె నేర్పు! చిత్రముల జూచుతఱి యవి సజీవులగు పురుషులట్లు గాన్పించుచొచ్చెను. గాని చిత్రములవలె గన్పట్టలేదు. ఉష వారి నెల్లర జూచెనుగాని తన స్వప్నమున గన్పడిన వాఁడందరిలో నెవ్వఁడును గాదనెను. అంత చిత్రలేఖ దేవతలను, రాక్షసులను, యక్ష కిన్నర కింపురుష గంధర్వ కుమారులను లిఖించి జూపె. అదియును విఫలంబయ్యెను. తుదకామె ద్వారకాపతియగు శ్రీకృష్ణుని, తత్కుమారులను లిఖించెను. అనంతరము కృష్ణపౌత్రుఁడగు అనిరుద్ధకుమారుని వ్రాయగా, ఉష గాంచి, మోహమున మందస్మితమొలయ, సిగ్గుచే తలవాంచి తన సమ్మతిజూపెను; గాని దానవాధిపుఁడగు కృష్ణునికి తనతండ్రి విరోధియగుటచే తన మనోరథము సఫలము గాదని విన్నదనము నొందెను.

అంత చిత్రలేఖ తన తిరస్కరిణీ విద్యాప్రభావముచే ననిరుద్ధు మందిరము జేరి నొరులెఱుంగక నిద్రాపరవశుఁడగు నాతని దెచ్చి యుషాకన్యకు సమర్పించెను.

చిత్రలేఖన మిప్పుడిప్పుడ యభివృద్ధి నొందుచున్నను, పూర్వమువలె సర్వజన సామాన్యము గలేదు. అట్టిదశనందుట కింకను కొన్ని దశాబ్దములు పట్టును. శీఘ్రకళచే నొప్పారు సకళారహస్యముల గ్రహించి మన భారత రమణులు తగు పరిశ్రమము సలిపి నీకళను, పునరుద్భవము గావించి చిత్రలేఖవలె ప్రసిద్ధులగుదురుగాక.

విశేష వార్తలు.

శ్రీమతి కమలాదేవి ఛట్టోపాధ్యాయగారిని వేలూరు చెరసాలనుండి విడుదలజేసిరి. ఆమె యొక్క శిక్షాకాల మింకను ముగించలేదు. కొన్నిరోజులనుండి యామె దేహారోగ్యము బాగులేకుండి నందున యామె విడుదల గావింపబడిరి.

మనుజుల కాయుఃపరిమితి నూఱేండ్లని చెప్పుదురు. అదియును నీకాలమున బహు దుర్లభమైనది. ఇప్పటివారు బహుళకలిదోషమున గాబోలు నల్పాయువులే గాని దీర్ఘాయువులుగారు. అఱువది, డెబ్బది వయస్సునిమీరి జీవించిన నదియే గొప్ప. విదేశములందు జనులు నూఱు సంవత్సరములకు పైబడియు బ్రదికియున్నవారున్నారని వార్తాపత్రికల మూలమున దెలిసికొనుచున్నాము. మన దేశమున పూర్వయుగములందు జనులు వేలకొలది సంవత్సరములు జీవించియుండిరని మన పురాణముల మూలమున మనకు దెలియును. దశరథమహారాజు 64 వేల యేండ్లు రాజ్యపరిపాలనము జేసెను. శ్రీరాముడు 11 వేల యేండ్లు ధరణి నేలెను.

ఇటీవల నొక స్త్రీ 115 సంవత్సరము జీవించియుండి మరణించిరి. ఈమె నివాసము పిఠాపురము. పేరు సీతమ్మగారు. శాఖ తెలగ. ఈమె భర్త కొలదికాలము క్రిందటనే మరణించిరి. వీరి సంతతివారు పెద్దలు పిన్నలు గలసి సుమారు 240 మంది యున్నారు. ఇన్నేండ్లు బ్రదుకుట యీకాలమున విచిత్రమే.

అమెరికాలో నిటీవల యొక క్రొత్తమాదిరి మోటారు తయారుజేయబడినది. మోటారొకటికి తయారుజేయు ఖర్చులు రూ. 50 మాత్రమే. ఇది గంటకు 24 మైళ్లు నడచునట. మఱియొక బ్రిటిషు ఇంజనీరు 4 పౌనులు ఖర్చుతో నొక చౌక మోటారు తయారుచేసెను. అది గాలను పెట్రోలుతో 100 మైళ్లు ప్రయాణము చేయునట.

దేవాలయములకు, దేవతా విశేషములకు నుత్సవాదులకు పెన్నికెక్కినది మన భరతఖండము. ఇందు దేవతల పేరు జెప్పిన నెట్టివారికైన విశ్వాసము తప్పకగలుగును. సాధారణ జనులందు మూఢభక్తి మెండు. ఈ దేశమున ప్రతి గ్రామమునందును ద్రౌపదీ దేవాలయమని నొక యాలయముండును. దీనికి తక్కిన దేవాలయాలవలె నేటేట బ్రహ్మోత్సవము పది రోజులు జరుగును. పదియవ రోజున భక్తులగ్ని గుండమున నడచుట వాడుక. దీని కాదికారణమేమో గాని కురుక్షేత్ర యుద్ధానంతరము రణమున వీరస్వర్గము నొందినవారి సతులెల్ల యగ్నిప్రవేశముజేసిన దాని స్మరింపజేయుటకని కొందరి యభిప్రాయము. ఈ రోజున భక్తులు, గుడిపూజారి, ప్రార్థనలు చెల్లించువారు, అందఱును పెద్ద యగ్నిగుండముపై నడతురు. దేవతా ప్రభావముచేతను వారి భక్తి విశ్వాసములచేతను వారి కగ్నిదేవునిచే నేకీడును కలుగులేదు.

ఇట్లు నడచువారు మిక్కిలి యాచారవంతులై మూడు దినములు నుపవసింపవలెను. పవిత్రతకొఱకు పలు తీర్థముల గ్రుంకు లిడవలెను. తర్వాత పసుపు వస్త్రముల ధరించి తలపై యమ్మవారి చిహ్నమగు కరగము నుంచుకొని నిప్పులపై నుమ్మూరు నడతురు. ఈ యుత్సవ మన్ని గ్రామములందును జరుగుట సహజమే.

గత మాసమున నుంగంబాక్కమున నీయుత్సవము జరుగునప్పుడు ప్రమాదవశమున నారుగురగ్నిగుండములో బడిరి వారి నాసుపత్రికి గొనిపోగా నిద్దరు మరణించిరి. మైలపోతుడుచే నిట్టివిపత్తు కలిగినదని యభిప్రాయము. అగ్నిగుండముపై నడువ సిద్ధపడినవారు మొత్తం 26 గురట. పడినవారు పోగా మిగిలినవారు మామూలుగా నడచిన తరువాత యథావిధియుత్సవము జరిగినది. ఇదియేమి మాహాత్మ్యమో !

మహమ్మదీయులలోగూడ నీయాచారము గలదు. మొహరం పండుగ ప్రారంభించిన యారవ రోజున వారు అల్లా పీర్లను తలపై నుంచుకొని యగ్నిగుండముపై ముమ్మారు నడతురు. ఇది దేవతా మహాత్మ్యమా లేక సత్య మహిమయా, లేక జనుల సంపూర్ణ భక్తి విశ్వాస కారణమా? అగ్నిలోబడి కాలకుండుట కేమి కారణము? నిజముగ నింతే !

గతమాసమున తిరుమలయందు బేబీ హెల్తు వారపుతరపున నారోగ్యప్రదర్శనము జరుపబడినది. శ్రీ అన్నారావుగారు అగ్రాసనాధిపత్యము వహించిరి. శ్రీమతి డాక్టరు ముత్తులక్ష్మిరెడ్డిగారు ఉపన్యసించిరి. అందలి సారాంశము:

“ తల్లిదండ్రులు తమ కొడుకులకు కుమార్తెలకు సమానముగ వివాహము జేయవలెను, అనగా కొందఱు తల్లిదండ్రులు కుమార్తెలకన్న కొడుకులే గొప్పయని తలంచెదరు. అందుచే తమ కుమార్తెలను, ఈడురాని పసితనముననే, జాతిమతముల కట్టుబాట్లను వెంబడించి, బంధువుల వొత్తిడితలకు భీతిల్లి విద్యావాసనలేమిచే నజ్ఞానమువననే ముదుసలికో యొసంగి పెండ్లిచేసెదరు. అది తప్పు, చిన్నపిల్లలకు వివాహము చేయుటవలన వారి దేహారోగ్యము చెడి వారికి కలుగు సంతతియు దుర్బలముగను నల్పాయుష్యముగను నగుచున్నది. ఇది మన దేశమున విద్య విరివిగా విస్తరించమిచే కలుగుదోషము. పిల్లలకు వివాహము చేయుట యెంత ముఖ్యమో వారికి విద్య గఱపుటకూడ యంత ముఖ్యమని, తమ విధ్యుక్త ధర్మమని తల్లిదండ్రులు తెలియంగవలెను. పదునాఱు సంవత్సరములకు లోపుగా బాలికలకు వివాహము చేయరాదు.

మఱియు, విద్యలేమిచేతను నజ్ఞానముచేతను, పసితనముననే పిల్లలగను నీ బాలికలు శిశుపరిపోషణాపద్ధతి చక్కగ నెఱింగినవారు గాకపోవుటచే పిల్లల పోషింపజాలకున్నారు. అందువలన శిశుమరణము మన దేశమున నధికముగ గన్పట్టుచున్నది. ఒక స్త్రీకి మిక్కిలి ప్రాణాపాయకరమగు నవస్థ ప్రసవకాలము. అట్టికాలమున వారికి విద్యాభ్యాసంగము లేకపోవుటచే, వారు తగిన డాక్టరులను పిలువక, మోటుదనముతో గూడిన మంత్రసానులకు తమ్ము నొప్పించుకొనియెదరు. వీరు తమ కేమునలిదో గఱపిన మోటుపద్ధతి నవలంబించువారేగాని, ఆవిషయమున చక్కగా శిక్షనొందినవారు గాకపోవుటచే తరుచుగా వీరి చేజిక్కిన వారు శిశువులు తల్లులుగూడా మృత్యుదేవత పాలగుచున్నారు. అట్లు గాకపోయినచో నంత్యసమయమున నాసుపత్రులకు గొంపోబడుచున్నారు. మన దేశమున ప్రసవకాలమున నాసుపత్రుల కేగువారు కొందరే. తక్కినవారందఱు మంత్రసానులను పిలచువారే. ఐనను గవర్నమెంటువారిచే నిప్పుడు శిశుపోషణాలయములు ప్రతిచోట నేర్పరుపబడి యుండుటచే నీ మరణములు కొంతవఱకు తగ్గినదని చెప్పవచ్చునుగాని, పూర్తిగా మానలేదు. ప్రతి జిల్లాయందును గ్రామమందును, స్త్రీలకు మంత్రసానితనమున తగుశిక్ష యొసంగవలెను” అని ముచ్చటించుచు నామె మఱియొక విషయమునుగూడా చెప్పిరి. అదేమన “మన దేశములో కుష్ఠరోగుల సంఖ్య యెక్కువగా నున్నది. నేను క్రిందనుండి తిరుమల పైకి వచ్చు దారిపొడుగున పందలకొలది బిచ్చగాండ్రను చూచితిని. వారందరు జనులు, అనగా నానాదేశములనుండి యరుదెంచు యాత్రికులు వచ్చుపోవు మార్గముల కిరుప్రక్కల గూర్చుండియున్నారు. వారిలో సగముకంటె నెక్కువమంది కుష్ఠరోగులు, క్షయరోగులే; తక్కినవారు కుంటి, గ్రుడ్డివారు. యాత్రికులు వివిధస్థలములనుండి వచ్చిపోవువారు గావున నీ కుష్ఠరోగులను. ఈ గొప్పయంటు రోగము వారిమూలమున నితరస్థలములకును సంక్రమింపగలదు. కావున ఈ యూరి మునిసిపాలిటీవారును, దేవస్థానాధికారులును, కుష్ఠరోగుల సంఖ్యను దీసి, వీరిని బాటలనుండుట కనుమతింపక వారికి ప్రత్యేక స్థానముల నొసంగి జనుల కుపకరింప తగు ప్రయత్నముచేసి తన్మూలమున నీ జాడ్య మితర ప్రదేశముల సంక్రమింపకుండ జేయుదురని గోరుచున్నాను.”

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